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**KESHAB BIRTH CENTENARY : 1938**

PILGRIMAGE  
TO  
BRAHMANANDA  
KESHAB CHANDRA SEN

BY  
MATILAL DAS  
( *Retired Inspector of Schools* )  
Author of *Keshab-Samagam, Keshab-Kahini,*  
*Inner Growth, Gandha-Puspa* etc.

First Edition

DACCA

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## PREFACE

The present volume has nothing to say about the man-Keshub of Bengal. It deals very briefly with the career of the universal Keshub born of the Holy Spirit. I should candidly state that I have tried, in my own humble way, to express what I have realised in the depths of my heart in the light of *faith* and culture. It is for the generous readers to decide how far I have been successful.

The Spirit-Keshub is still an inexplicable riddle. His time is not yet. The *Future* will unfold him gradually. It is my firm conviction that he will live and steadily grow for ever in the heart of progressive Humanity. Glory to the Eternal and Infinite Spirit !

DACCA  
1938

MATILAL DAS



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KESHUB AT PRAYER

# PILGRIMAGE TO BRAHMANANDA KESHAB CHANDRA

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## The Man Of My Dream

I am a lonely pilgrim,—wayworn and heavy-laden. I left my home over half a century ago, and have since been wandering about in a *strange land* in quest of the Beautiful Man Of My Dream. My only guide is a *Voice In The Air*, which every-now-and-then resounds in the heart in ever-changing notes.

God's Anointed is *he*, and God is all-in-all to him,—“the Life of his life, the Light of his eyes, the Comfort of his heart, his richest Treasure now and for ever.”

The “Voice” seems to say that the Beautiful Man lives in the Garden of Elysium far far away from this world of darkness and death, and passes his days *there* most happily in constant communion with the All-blissful Lord. Listen !

“Rich and manifold are His mercies : unto me, His servant, hath He shown abundant Love.....

“He hath brought me into His Garden, where in the company of His saints I sing His glory, and His joy overflows my heart.

“Sweet is my God, and beautiful His countenance, and His eyes full of tender love towards His anointed,”—*My sweet Ektara*.

“In the Garden of Elysium I have secured the sweetest and most beautiful rose. How fortunate am I, O God ; Thy servant is richer than the richest, happier than the happiest ! Give me ambrosial odour, Thou Heavenly Rose. Joy of my soul, I seek nothing else. Glory, glory, glory to Thee, now and for ever.”—*Prayers* (10-6-83.)

Such is *he*—The Man of My Dream ! And my soul pants after *him* day and night.

And so this life-long quest !

## II

It was only once long long ago that I had a glorious vision of the Beautiful Man beyond the shining Blue within my heart.

He looked at me, and I was conquered. This look was like a ray of Divine Light that inspires and illumines.

He spoke to me, and his spirit-voice came down as a tender note of love, and gently touched my inner consciousness. There was a strange sensation, and I was stirred to my inmost depth.

I awoke, and opened my eyes in wonder. I was just like one returning to New Life from the Land of Death !

A sense of isolation gradually took possession of my mind, and I could not help crying. This was the cry of a solitary soul for his beloved one, — an intense longing for that celestial fellowship which a human being can never do without.

“Where art thou, my Beloved One ?”

“Here, my darling, here, in the silent mansion of thy heart !”

Strange still small twin-voices !

### III

The vision is now like a mysterious dream that *is* and *is not*, and yet *is*. It maddens my mind

all the more, and I am trudging, trudging, and trudging. Will there be no end of this life-journey ?

There comes a response spontaneously from where I need not say,—

“Lo ! I am in you with the God of Truth and Mercy. He will bless you and save you”.—

*Am I An Inspired Prophet ?*

Sweet words of hope and consolation ! But these only add fuel to the fire within, and I am plodding more vehemently on and on !

The days and nights are fleeting with all their lights and shadows, and my phenomenal existence flits also. The world silently moves on like a weird spectre. But my heart is not here, is not there, but constantly after the Man Of My Dream—Sri Kesub Chandra, The Rejoicer in God.

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# The Wonderful Man

## I. As Seen By The Best Of Mankind :

“Keshub Chunder Sen is the wonder of the Nineteenth Century,” says General Walker, and this assertion is universally admitted as *true*.

Sri Brahmananda Keshub Chandra is undoubtedly a *wonderful man*. Western sight-seers eagerly visit India with the object of seeing this “Rare Flower of the East” \*, or of hearing this mysterious “Voice In The Air,” \* or of coming in touch with this “Soul of New India.” \*

England looks at him and asks in amazement,—

“Who among all living men  
Is this Keshub Chunder Sen ?”—

*Punch.*

Scotland welcomes him as “The Coming Man” :

“Ye crack aboot the comin’ man,  
But here’s a chap frae Hindustan,  
As rare as need tae be.”—

Joseph Tenan,  
(The Scotsman, Edinburgh.)

\* Epithets given by foreigners.

The expectant *West* greets this “New Star risen in the *East*,”—

“Servant of God—greetings. From the first time your name and mission became known to me, my soul rejoiced, and I gave thanks to God that it had pleased Him to write all truths, and thus produce peace on earth and good will among men. I hail thee and the new era with joy and gladness. Thy star risen in the *East* shines even unto the *West*, and shall continue to shine until its rays encircle this planet with a belt of glory—Even so. Amen.”—

C. H. Hassal (Manchester).  
a letter to Keshub  
Published in the N. D., 1883.

Again—

“Glad words of welcome fell upon thine ear,  
When first we hailed thee to our shores ;  
And myriad gentle voices, soft and clear,  
Sang forth thy praises o’er and o’er.

“Illustrious guest ! for thee in stranger land,  
Love lives in every English breast ;  
Thou noble leader of the noble band,  
May countless blessings on thee rest !

“In God’s might may’st thou onward joyful go,  
A soldier brave in camp and field ;  
Victory to gain in every blow,  
And bid at once each traitor yield.

• \* \* \* \*

“Oh chief beloved ! thou art a traveller, too,  
And earthly thy tent ! a little while :  
The joys in Heav’n will burst upon thy vision,  
And thou shalt know thy Master’s smile.”—

Miss Marianne Poore, noted authoress,

( Welcome to Keshub Chunder Sen  
on behalf of the East Central Association,  
London,—May, 1870. )

T. E. Stephens, J. P., of the National Liberal Club, London, speaks of Sri Keshub thus,—

“The 40 years which have passed since the memorable visit to England of Keshub Chunder Sen, may not, according to English tradition, be absolutely sufficient to estimate the exact place he will permanently fill in the ranks of the great men of the world. It is proverbial with us that at least a century is required to do so.

“But there is sufficient ground for asserting after the experience of those 40 years during which he has been indisputably recognised as



*'India's greatest son,' to predict that at the end of the century, he will still hold that place in the estimation of his fellow-countrymen, as being the greatest spiritual prophet, patriot and reformer that India has ever produced.*

"His was a personality, like his teaching, quite exceptional and unique. The impression he made could never be forgotten by those in natural sympathy with ideals and aims, and correctly understanding the man. To look at him was a revelation ; to hear him was a privilege ; but to speak with him was to bring yourself into communion with one who seemed to be already living the higher life of the Spirit, whilst in the world of men and human affairs."—

( Extract from a lecture delivered at  
Essex Hall, London, on 8-1-1910.)

The great "philosopher and saint", James Martineau, speaks of Sri Keshub Chunder Sen as a soul "*the most congenial to Jesus*"—"bringing refulgent light from the East to the comparative darkness of the West."

Miss Frances Power Cobbe writes of an

interview with Sri Keshub to her friend Miss Lloyd (April 28, 1870) :—

“Keshub came and sat with me the other evening, and I was profoundly impressed, not by his intellect, but by his goodness. He seems really to *live in God*, and the single-mindedness of the man seemed to me utterly un-English, *much more like Christ*”—*London in the Sixties and Seventies*, (page 133.)

Cassel's Magazine (England) speaking of Sri Keshub's inborn greatness asserts—

“More than one who know him have said that they could better understand *Christ's childlike confidence* in God since they have seen *him*” [Sri Keshub].

The great savant F. Max Muller pays homage to Sri Keshub as “India's greatest son,” and deliberately gives him “the first place among his fellow-countrymen, and a pre-eminent place among the best of mankind.”

Rev. Herbert Anderson speaks of Sri Keshub thus :—

“To know him was to love him ; to have but a casual acquaintance was to honour and respect him ! and to those who must go to the printed

page to learn his worth, his personality fascinates, his life's keen sorrows touch the heart, his brave words, and braver deeds in the realm of social reform command attention and invite imitation. May it be ours to follow where he led, and seeking not the approbation of men but daily striving to obey the will of God may we be worthy of an epitaph that might well have been his,—

“He had kept the whiteness of his soul,  
And so men o'er him wept.”

The celebrated Professor Estlin Carpenter pays the following beautiful tribute to Sri Keshub,—

“Through the magic of his speech and the kindling power of his personality ran the force of one who lived in habitual communion with the Unseen. The sense of the universal presence of God, which was the heritage of the higher minds of his race, became with him a constant fellowship with an infinite and holy spirit.”—  
(Public Meeting at Essex Hall, London, on 8-1-1906, presided over by Sir R. K. Wilson Bart).

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Europe pays homage to Sri Keshub as the Great Founder of a universal Religion :—

“Keshub is one of those men who, according to circumstances, can become a Buddha, a Mahomed

or a Luther. It suffices to have seen him or even to have known his works to understand the ascendancy which he exercises upon the masses.

“The fusion of all religions into one synthetic religion has been in all ages the dream of many a large and illumined spirit in advance of the times. Aristotle, Cleanthus, Seneca, Maximus of Tyre, Confucius, Kabir, the Sufis of Persia, as also the German Idealists, and contemporary hierlogues, have shewn the identity of the religious sentiment under a multiplicity of manifestations. Some thinkers such as Proclus, Jamblicus, Alexander Severn in the antiquity, Akbar in India in the middle ages and, up to a certain point, August Comte in our century have even tried to found a universal religion, not in eliminating the different elements of the principal religions in the fashion of English Theism and American Transcendentalism, but in juxtapositing their rites and symbols or the names and forms under which those religions conceive the supreme object of worship.

“Such is equally the work undertaken by Keshub, and if there is a difference it is this that *the author of the New Dispensation has succeeded in founding a religion there where his predecessors*

*have not been able to get their syncretism out of the domain of individual phantasy.”—*

(Contemporary Religious Evolution)  
Count Coblet D’Al Villa.\*

Professor Kesselring of Zurich, Switzerland, writes to Rev. P. C. Mazumdar,—

“For many years we have followed the religious movement of the Brahmo Samaj with warm interest and with the feeling of a deep spiritual affinity. Many times our minds have been enlightened and edified by the deep truths and the lofty enthusiasm of Keshub Chunder Sen’s lectures and discourses, and seized by the pious effusions of his heart……His name will never be forgotten among his countrymen and in whole mankind……We fully understand why he would not accept the name of a Christian, though he was so often urged to do so. He was persuaded that religious truth could not be confined exclusively to this name and to this community, and he therefore lovingly acknowledged all elements of truth dispersed in all religions, and particularly in the religious and philosophical traditions of

\* He came to India with His Gracious Majesty Edward VII in 1875.

his own country, though the true spirit af the Gospel was the very centre of his religious ideas."

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America whole-heartedly receives the new message of Navavidhan from the New Messenger of God,—

"I am greatly rejoiced at the kind and loving spirit of your address, and the sweet tenderness and prayer with which it abounds. You know at the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ the angels sang 'glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.' I am glad to find in the New Dispensation of India the same happy spirit breathed.

"I have long known that God in His wise providence has raised up Buddha and Confucious and Zoroaster and Mahomed &c., to instruct the peoples of earth according to their respective geniuses, and to draw them from their evils and sins...Yours is a work that angels would gladly leave Heaven to perform. You are highly honoured."

W. M. Codville,  
Pennsylvania, U. S. A.,  
(Extracts from a letter to Keshub,  
dated 16. 3. 1883.)

Rev. E. L. Rexford of America sends "cordial greeting" to Sri Keshub :—

"Will you permit me to send you my word of cordial greeting from this distant land, and my hearty thanksgiving for the noble thoughts you are sending out to the world in the name of religion ? Your noble address at Calcutta ("We Apostles Of The New Dispensation") reached a great number of American readers through the *New York Independent*, and I am so impressed with the essential truth of its principles that I can not forbear telling you of my joy that such a message in this day is sent to us from the orient which has spoken so many times before to the world. It seems to me that you announce the essential Law of Christianity, which has been concealed under a mass of ignorant and unappreciative interpretations. I am not at all particular about its being the Law of Christianity. It is the *Law of a real and true religion*, and I glory in it and thank you."

Another cheering epistle, dated 2. 4. 1883, in response to Sri Keshub's New Year Day Proclamation (across the Atlantic) :—

"I have just seen and read your epistle to the churches and nations of the East and West. Allow

me to say that I respond to it most heartily. For I also, here in the distant West, believe in the New Dispensation of which the corner stone is, 'there is one God the Father of all ; and all men are His children, and thus are brethren.'

"It seems to me that the Eternal Spirit is moving upon the face of the waters both in the East and the West, in order to bring Harmony out of Chaos."—

Henry Peterson,  
Philadelphia, U. S. A.

The celebrated Christian Preacher and Theologian Rev. J. T. Sunderland of America speaks of Sri Keshub thus :—

"I am convinced that among the religious leaders of the entire world during that important period he (Keshub) should be regarded as occupying a place not second in influence to any. I do not think that any nation of Europe or America produced within that time a more powerful religious orator, or a truer prophet after the type of the Old Testament prophets and of Paul and Jesus, or a more impressive and inspiring religious personality, than he who gave to the Brahmo Somaj its great new birth of spiritual power and fervour, and who all through the sixth and seventh



decades of the century so mightily stirred all India with an impulse toward religious and social reform."

( An extract from an article on Sri Keshub Chunder Sen).

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Dr. F. C. Southworth, M, A., D. D., L. L. D. of United States, America, pays the following glowing tribute to the loving memory of Sri Keshub Chunder, at an over-crowded public meeting held at the Albert Hall, Calcutta, on 8th January, 1929 :

*" He was not only the greatest son of India, but one of the greatest men of the world. They had been travelling for some weeks among the largest cities in India, and were highly impressed to see the reverence and respect which the people of India had shown to their great prophet Keshub Chunder Sen. When they first got the message of Keshub in America they realised that this great man, though different in colour and manner and custom, was preaching the same thing which they were searching for... His greatest contribution to India, nay to the world, was his profound belief in God and harmonisation of all religions, and the establishment of the brotherhood of mankind.*

The speaker was grateful to that great prophet as they had got the first inspiration from that great world-teacher. " (An extract from his speech).

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Africa pays homage to Sri Keshub :—

"I am now Canon of the Cathedral here ; and have just read in the *Contemporary Review* for October, Dr. Knighton's paper on "The New Dispensation." I feel that it is for this that I have been hoping all my life—now of more than fifty years' duration. Will you put me in a position to announce particulars of this grand scheme to the large congregation amongst whom I minister here ?

*"Before your magnificent conception all else seems dwarfed and stunted. Surely it would be well if preachers of positions and influence inside the different systems you seek to fuse could be got to bring the subject before their congregations. I see no other means of confronting materialism than by some such union of all spiritual believers".*—Rev. Maurice Davies,

Grahamstown, Africa.

(A letter to Sri Keshub.)

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Lord Ronaldshay, P. C., G. C. S. I., G. C. I. E. (now Earl of Zetland) speaks of Sri Keshub thus:—

“Young Bengal was rapidly becoming both denationalised and demoralised. Still it must be borne in mind that however prominent a place Young Bengal occupied in the public eye, it constituted but a minute fraction of the population. It was like the foam caught by wind on the surface of the sea. Beneath the surface still rolled the deep placid waters of Indian life. And it is probable that the reaction against Westernism would have been as sudden and as violent as the original craze for it, had it not been for two things—the economic pressure which drove the middle classes to seek employment in Government service ; and secondly, the rise of certain men of outstanding personality and character who took up the threads where they had been dropped by Raja Ram Mohun Roy and his companions—men of vision who saw the need of a rational synthesis of the best that Europe and Asia had to give, and who strove, consequently, to weave into the tapestry of Indian Life such threads from the spindles of the West as would enrich, without bringing about a complete alteration of outline

in the pattern upon the Eastern loom. *Among such men stands out the commanding figure of Keshub Chunder Sen...*

"He was one of those men whose whole being is inspired by a missionary zeal, and in the circumstances of the times in which he lived he found unlimited scope for his activities.

"He was, indeed, pre-eminently a man who lived by faith, a man whose whole life was dominated by an intuitive knowledge that he had a mission to perform, and who exercised over his fellow-men the influence which outstanding personality inspired by a steadfast singleness of purpose and a contagious enthusiasm, can always command.

"He does not seem to have been a highly-finished orator, capable of delighting an audience of dilettantes with polished periods of artistic rhetoric. Yet he was undoubtedly able to sway and dominate vast assemblies by his power of speech—speech pouring forth in torrents of rugged eloquence, speech surging up spontaneously from the depths of his innermost being, speech stamping him not as an artist, but as a seer—a man inspired with a message for the world, and compelled by the unseen forces to deliver it...

“He, more than any man, perhaps, showed by precept and example that the gulf between Europe and Asia might be bridged without the sacrifice of anything that was fundamental in the race-genius or the race-culture of either. While he was capable of assimilating much that seemed to him good in the ideals and practice of the West, he remained always a true Indian. He was too great a character to become a mere mimic of others, and he was too great a soul to cherish that false pride of race which blinds a man to the virtues of all peoples other than his own. He showed how East and West might be complementary rather than antagonistic to one another.”—

(Extracts from the *Heart of  
Aryavarta*—1927).

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Rev. C. F. Andrews speaks of Sri Keshub's later years and of his relation with Sri Ramkrishna thus—

“Keshub's later years were in many ways, the most significant of all. The mystical side of his

nature which he had inherited from his mother in childhood, returned as he reached middle age. His life burnt itself out in flaming ecstasy of realised union with the Unseen, through prayer and *Kirtan* and emotional fervour. Here his contact with Ramkrishna Paramahansa served to reinforce that deepest element in him which at last had come to the surface. *Ramkrishna himself much owed to Keshub, and Keshub owed much to Ramkrishna.* It would be invidious to apportion or appraise the debt which one owed to the other: for both were greatly blessed by their mutual fellowship and affection. *It was like fire meeting with fire and bursting into a flame.*

“Some of the last sayings of his all too short life (for he died when he was at the height of his spiritual power) are the best of all; and the friendships which he left behind him have never grown dim.”

—*The Orient* (1938).



The Rev. Leslie J. Belton, Editor of *The Enquirer* (London) pays homage to Sri Keshub as one of the “greatest of the prophets and seers”—

“Emerson once said that an institution is the shadow of a great man. Many of us still believe that to-day despite the tendency to minimise the influence of personality in the making of history we hold that history is primarily determined, not by inexorable laws but the directive exercise of human thought and will. To whom else may we look for guidance in the art of living than to the greatest of men and supremely to the spiritual seers ?

“Of hero-worship the world has had enough, but with hero-reverence we can never be sated. The greatest of the prophets and seers disclose to us the rich possibilities of human nature.

“Was Keshub Chunder Sen such a man ? I believe he was. We honour him most of all as a religious genius...As Dr. Martineau pointed out at the welcome meeting on the occasion of Keshub’s visit to England in 1870, his religion derived primarily neither from the ancient religion of his country nor from Christianity : it arose out of the springs of his own personality in response

to his own deeply-felt need. His was a religion of harmony such as the world needs to-day.

“We honour him, too, because, for all his devotional fervour, he lived his life in the world of men, not as a *Sannyasin* but as a householder and the father of a family. And he was true to his own India. Cosmopolitan in spirit, he was yet in the nobler sense of that term, a nationalist. He saw the evil which arises when a people imitates the least desirable features of an alien culture.

“We admire him, too, for his moral heroism. His courage in defying the religious customs of his family was tested again and again, for Keshub was an innovator—specially in the matter of religious ritual—and no innovator but has his critics.

“With him belief and practice were indissolubly united and that is why we honour him also for social conscience, for his stand against the aberrations of the caste system, untouchability, the liquor laws of the time and child-marriage. Social reform was part and parcel of his religious faith.

“Finally, he was a reconciler. His very presence in England sufficed to bring together on



one platform—no easy achievement in those days—Christians of many denominations and a Jewish Rabbi, all of whom bore witness to their admiration of his sterling worth as an uplifter of men. As such we honour him to-day—we who belong to different races and various faiths. If the spirit in which he lived inspires us also then our present ills will be overcome and East and West conjointly will acclaim the New Dispensation which Keshub Chunder Sen foresaw”—(Keshub Centenary meeting at Caxton Hall, London, held on 11. 7. 1938.)



Bharat Laksmi, the Holy Mother of countless Bhaktas, Yogis, Rishis, saints, seers, sages and savants, is proud of Her youngest child, Sri Brahmananda Keshub Chundra, because of the fact that it is in him that Her other immortal sons and daughters have been revived and united into a blessed confraternity. She affectionately caresses *him* and holds *him* aloft saying with a smile,—“behold the New Bhakta of the New Age !”

All hear the Mother's *Voice* and most warmly respond :

Maharshi Devendra Nath finds in this wonderful child "a genuine man of God" and "a perfect marvel of religious genius," and regards him as "the wealth of seven empires !" He is actuated by divine influence to invest "the beloved of his heart" with the title of *Brahmananda* (Rejoicer in God), because he had never before met a devotee whose only delight lay in the Eternal and Infinite Spirit. Every letter Maharshi writes to his "প্রাণাধিক" *Brahmananda*, and the answer he receives thereof from the latter, show in clear light the depth and intensity of heavenly love that binds for ever these two *Sadhaks* so differently constituted. (Vide *Patrabali*, published by Pundit Priya Nath Sastri).

Sri Ramkrishna Paramahansa endearingly calls Sri Keshub, "মায়ের বছরাই গোলাপ গাছ !" (The Rose Tree of the Heavenly Mother, that smiles with flowers throughout the year !)—Very wonderful is the spiritual fellowship that naturally grows up between these two kindred souls. Whenever they meet they spontaneously take each other in the arms, and dance in ecstatic communion with the supreme Mother singing all the while,—“আমরা

মায়ের, মা আমাদের !” (We are of the Mother, and the Mother is ours !) Verily, there is a spiritual affinity between the two Bhaktas, and the one is unconsciously drawn towards the other. It is therefore no wonder that the great Saint should look upon the God-intoxicated Keshub “as his *alter ego*,—as the man of his heart,—his veritable Krishna.”\*

Paohari Baba, the celebrated saint of Gazipur, who always lives under-ground immersed in deep meditation of God, and to whom Sri Keshub is, to all appearance, a perfect stranger, comes to know, *how no one can tell*, that Brahmananda is there as a visitor. So, he suddenly comes out and quite familiarly approaches the illustrious guest, exclaiming,—

“কেশো বাবা অবতার হ্যায় !”

The interchange of spiritual sentiments, that follows, is really strange.

\* “Thou art Krishna and I am Radha”, was the ardent cry of Sri Ramkrishna, when one day during a Maghotsab he happened to meet Sri Keshub in a steamer at the Dakhineswar Ghat, and embraced him fervently. This one instance is sufficient to prove the genuineness of their deep spiritual attachment. ( Vide chapter XXII of *Sri Keshab Kahini*.)

Swami Dayananda Saraswati, the great Religious Reformer of the Punjab, also inexplicably gets himself entangled in the meshes of Sri Keshub's all-embracing love so much so that he can not help coming to Calcutta and seeking interview with the "Wonderful Man ! Sadhu Vaswani of Sindh solemnly asserts that one of the immediate results of this memorable visit was the establishment of the Arjya Somaj.

Who will unravel the mystery that hangs upon the workings of spiritual fellowship secretly existing between two kindred souls ? I shall cite only another instance of a similar nature :

Sri Brahma Sarup, the well-known Naga Saint of Haldi Bari, Cooch Behar, had never in his life seen Sri Keshub with his own eyes, or heard his voice with his own ears. Still there grows up a close spiritual companionship between them under mysterious laws of the spirit-world ; so, the apparently unfamiliar persons become thoroughly familiar and deeply attached to each other ! Who will deny that truth is stranger than fiction ?—(Vide "*Acharya Keshub Chundra*", Adya Bibaran),

The celebrated journalist and thinker N. N.

Ghose, F. L. S. (London), F. R. S. Z., speaks of Sri Keshub Chunder Sen thus :—

“Keshub Chunder Sen is seen at his best, in the perfection of his glory, in the fulness of his intellectual and spiritual powers, in the latest years of his life. The fire of his youth continued not merely unabated ; it had been sublimed. It was all light, no heat. In his own life he had passed from the hero's strife to the saint's rest. And he was prepared to teach the world not only how to battle with wrong but how to attain peace,”

Sadhu Vaswani of Sindh pays the following glowing tribute to Brahmananda Keshub Chundra,—

“Keshub ! A man of the future ! His time is not yet. Him I salute as a bridge-builder of the future. His place is among the world's reconcilers, the pioneers who work for unity of races and religions.

“The man was greater than all his works, his activities, his organisations. Keshub practised God-vision in daily life. There is a revolt against religion. The revolt is spreading and still will spread. Let us not blame the young. They will not submit to forms and creeds. Life has departed out of these forms ; and creeds are broken

reeds. Churches and Somajes need a new breath of the Spirit, Where are the God-men ?

“A gift of God to us was this man Keshub. A man of God-vision. We did not treat him well. We have not realised yet the full measure of his spiritual greatness. Some reject him ; some seek to imprison him in a cult. *Pardon us, O Thou Son of Freedom ! The future yet will vindicate Thee !*”

The Hon'ble Raja Sir Manmathanath Roy Chowdhury, K. T. pays homage to Sri Keshub as *an Epoch-making Man*,—

“The great Keshub was one of those who are born to live through eternity, knowing no decay or end. Truth is eternal, and he lived in truth. Faith is perpetual, and he lived in faith. Love is indestructible, and he lived in love. Truth, Faith and love combined to eternalise his holy existence....

“The sweetness and geniality of Keshub Chunder's nature, the purity of his character, the saintliness of his soul, his life-inspiring words, his supernatural eloquence and his wonderful spiritual achievements, I have no manner of doubt, shall continue to cheer us, comfort us, as we go on fighting the battles of life. His life which

inaugurated a new era in the spiritual and intellectual history of India, is a guarantee that Providence has yet a great destiny in store for our motherland. It stands to reason that the country which produced such an *epoch-making man* may well look forward hopefully to the future." (8. 1. 1935 —Albert Hall, Calcutta).

The Hon'ble Jogendra Chandra Ghose, M. A., B. L., after paying a glowing tribute to the sacred memory of Sri Keshub as a "true prophet," invokes his spirit thus :—

"You are gone, O king and Master, and the spirit of darkness has, once again, swept over the plains of India, and their breath has killed all enthusiasm, all devotion, eye, all true patriotism. Come back, O Mighty Master, and fight them ; for those that follow you, are weak and faint. Come back with the angels of God and the prophets of old whom you loved so well, and roll back the lowering clouds of the dark and low spirits that have overspread the firmament of your country."

Devi Sarojini Naidu, the greatest daughter of Modern India, as President of the first Keshub Centenary meeting held at the Senate Hall, Calcutta on 19th November, 1937, pays homage

to Sri Keshub *as the Teacher who preached the great ideal of National Freedom and International Fellowship* :—

‘It is a significant fact that at the meeting when the celebration of the centenary of Rajah Ram-Mohan Roy was decided upon, all old men occupied the front places, while I see now on this occasion young generation occupying prominent places. I stand before them to bear testimony to the inspiration of the great man. I realise that the progress which India has made today, step by step, generation by generation, is due in a large measure, to the great ideal of national freedom and international fellowship for which Keshub Chunder Sen stood. He broke down the barriers of ages and bondages of centuries, old fashioned loyalties and fanaticism.

“The message of Keshub Chunder Sen was the message of great democratic ideal, and it is for the young generation to transmit it into action which would find manifestation in the unity of races and communities of India. It is this national solidarity which would be the most lasting memorial to the name and vision of Keshub Chunder. They should not also lose sight of the greater fellowship and sense of kinship with the world which he foreshadowed. The present



generation should transcend all narrow individual and sectional barriers, and realise that world-citizens are all fellow-members of one common race. What could be greater conception than this that every man and every woman should be servant of humanity, and their goal liberation of Humanity."

That celebrated scholar and educationist, Prof. Syed Hossain, says (at the Senate Hall Meeting mentioned above),—

"Keshub Chunder Sen was the greatest religious genius which Modern India produced. They in India were to-day entering upon the threshold of a new era of national development, and they should profit from the life and teachings of Keshub Chunder Sen. One thing remarkable about these was the universality and catholicity of their appeal. They all, irrespective of political, communal or religious labels, could pre-eminently profit by the example of Keshub Chunder Sen. Time had come when Indians should realise the fundamental unity of their rule and racial destiny."

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## II. As Realised Through Direct Vision :

Let us now turn our eyes inward and directly take a glimpse of *the Interior Man*. What do we see ? Is he not *wonderful* ?

(i) Sri Keshub is, indeed, a Singular Child of God, and this singularity lies in the fact that he is constitutionally a *plural being*. Behind the visible *I* there is an invisible *We*, and this “we” connotes *Humanity as a whole*. Listen to what Sri Keshub himself says to his Maker, —

“স্বর্গেতে তুমি একজন মানুষ প্রস্তুত করিয়াছিলে, সেই মানুষ আমি। যখন তুমি পৃথিবীতে আমাকে আনিলে তখন আমি ছিলাম সদল অথগু ।.....

“নব দুর্গার সন্তান নব মানুষ। শত শত হস্ত, শত কর্ণ, শত নাসিকা, শত চক্ষু,—এই যে প্রকাণ্ড নবাকৃতি মানুষ সেই আমি।”—দৈনিক প্রার্থনা। (৪ঠা অগ্রহায়ণ, ১৮৮২ ইং)

Hear again what he says in a different way about the *Oversoul* within him,—

“The Lord Jesus is my will, Socrates my head, Chaitanya my heart, the Hindu Rishi my soul and the philanthropic Howard my right hand.”—*We Apostles Of The New Dispensation*.

## (ii) "All Things to All Men."

Sri Keshub is all things to all men ; because his *all-in-all* is God, and God dwells in him with Humanity, and in Humanity with *him*.

He is a Christian to the Christians, a Hindu to the Hindus, a Mahomedan to the Mahomedans and a Buddhist to the Buddhists. All claim him as their own ; but he does not belong to any particular community, he belongs to all at the same time. He is above creed, colour or community.

And there is no denying *this fact*. The great savant Professor F. Max Muller says, —

"Keshub Chunder Sen's devotion to Christ seemed excessive to many of his friends in India and Europe. If he had lived in the first century he would have been the most loving disciple of the founder of our religion ; living in the nineteenth, though he was more truly a Christian than hundreds or thousands who call themselves Christians, yet he would not join our ranks, but set himself the higher and harder task which he called the task of *Christianising Christianity*."

If Sri Keshub is a true Christian, he is certainly a Hindu of Hindus. Listen to the words of the great Novelist Bankim Chandra,—

“ঐ মহাত্মা [ কেশবচন্দ্র ] স্মত্ৰাক্ষণের শ্রেষ্ঠ গুণ সকলে ভূষিত ছিলেন । তিনি সকল ব্রাহ্মণদের ভক্তির যোগ্য পাত্র ।”

Translation :—That Mahatma [ Keshub Chandra ] was adorned with all the excellences of a true Brahmin. He fully deserves reverential regards from all Brahmins.”

This is not all : Not a few of the learned Pundits of Navadwip deeply respected Sri Keshub not only as a true Baishnab, but even as an Incarnation of Sri Chaitanya. I need not cite testimonies which are innumerable.

And is it not true that the great Sir Syed Ahmad always respected this wonderful man as a true follower of Mahomed, or that renowned Moslems like Syed Serajuddin Ahmad and Syed Sadaruddin Ahmad considered him to be a “*Paigambar*” and were always eager to come in touch with his spirit ?

It is also a fact that a great Buddhist Reformer like Dharmapal looked on Sri Keshub as one who had attained the bliss of Nirvan and had been in spirit one with Sri Bhudha.

Verily, Brahmananda Keshub Chandra is all things to all men. And this essential manysidedness of his character is given by the Lord that it may draw all hearts and all nations unto Him,

### (iii). The Child of Nature.

Sri Keshub is a *Child of Nature*, and as such belongs to *all*, and *all* claim him as their own. He is eminently simple and natural, and his perfect naturalness is his *universality*.

Being one with Nature, he is one with God on the one hand, and one with Man on the other. He feels and enjoys the harmony of the whole universe, because he is in tune with the infinite, Says he—

“Great God, Nature stands between Thee and Man ; and no one can know Thee unless his heart is atuned to the spirit of Nature. Make my mind one with Thee in Nature.”—*Prayers*.

“Nature is love, and not discord. Nature reconciles, and never disunites. The name of Nature is Harmony.”—*Prayers*.

Indeed, his soul's delight is to find and see vividly God in Nature ; and everything in the amplitudes of Nature is to him a Messenger from God, sent for edification. He loves also to commune with God through Nature, because Nature is transparent and shows God in visible, audible and tangible forms,”

#### (iv). The Living Emblem of Harmony.

The present generation looks on Sri Keshub as "The Prophet of Harmony." There is not the least doubt that he is the Living Emblem of Harmony, and that the primary object of his life is not only to worship and love God as Eternal Harmony, but also to reconcile and harmonise the various systems of religion in the world, and thereby make all the Churches in the East and the West one universal church of God. Hear what he says in a prayer to his beloved Lord,—

"Lord, I would worship Thee and love Thee as Eternal Harmony. Thou art not only perfection, but perfection in all things. Thou art the harmony of all truth and all goodness. If then Thou art my Master and my Ideal and my Patern, I must follow Thee, and humbly strive to be as perfect as Thou art perfect...As I look on Thy beautiful harmony, my God, I am fascinated, and my heart pants for its attainment. Father of Harmony, graciously hear my humble prayer, and make me a *Child of Harmony* at Thy feet."—*Prayers.*

Listen to his prayer again,—“Ever-new and

Ever-beautiful God, grant that we may realise in our life the harmony of all Thy Dispensations. As followers of the New Dispensation, let us combine in our character the various elements represented by Sakya, Moses, Christ and Chaitanya. Teach us to concentrate in one focus all the fragments of light which lie scattered in different places and in different ages."—*Prayers*.

His daily life is a living illustration of the harmony of work and devotion. Too much work makes the heart dry, and too much devotion induces quietism and makes us neglect the important duties of life. It is *he* who has beautifully harmonised the two. He is always devout in the midst of his daily duties, and ever mindful of his duties in the midst of absorbing devotion. His hand works out Divine Law like an untiring machine, while the heart is always warm with Divine Love.

Sri Keshub is real and sincere to the very core. What he feels he says, and what he says he actually does. His words and actions are so many echoes of his inner attainments.

## (v). Sri Keshub's Life—A Grand Synthesis.

Sri Keshub's life is quite a new thing to this world of discord and disunion. It is absolutely synthetical, and its very breath is *unity*. It unmistakably implies fusion of Faith, Love and Purity in their highest harmonious development. *Truth* is his eternal habitation, *Love* his daily food and drink, and *Sanctity* his joy and peace for ever.

His *faith* has nothing to do with abstraction or reflection. It is not simply "the substance of things not seen." It is *direct vision*.

By *vision* he means not hallucination but perception of stern realities of the spirit-world, the direct apprehension of God and Heaven in consciousness."

He beholds God in Nature and in Humanity as vividly as men see external objects. This "seeing God" is as easy as the process of breathing.

He lives in God to have Faith, and so is the master of untold treasure.

He has found the Rock of Faith, and his heart rejoices in having seen the God of his salvation. Listen—



"Blessed be my God, I have seen Thee face to face, and heard Thy word of wisdom ;—of this I am sure ; of this I am absolutely certain. How happy I am in my faith is known to Thee. O my heart's delight, give me yet more faith, and may the joy of trust abound in me."—*Prayers.*

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Deep and hidden is his *Love* of God and Man. It is inwardly active for service, and outwardly calm and impassioned. He is uninterruptedly walking in the path of ever-growing Love, and to him the way of Love is the way of eternal progress.

His *Love* is universal, and rolls ceaselessly onward. It means going out of self and its absorption in Divinity, and through Divinity in Humanity. He is like a pilgrim who has left home and gone away, never to return. He lives within everybody else but his own self, and in every place except his own home.

His *Love* also means intense suffering for the good of Mankind. He is indeed an "eternal exile," and his shelter is in destitution, and his joy in compassion. To look at him is to feel a mysterious stirring within, which impels the heart

to move upward, and silently knock at the celestial gate of Mercy. Listen to what he says in a letter dated, 20th August, 1865, addressed to Maharshi Devendra Nath,—

“I am poor, sufferings are my food, anxiety my rest, and on a bed of thorns my sleep. My mission is to preach a religion of reconciliation. Woe to me if I can not verify it in my own life, Glory to truth. Peace to you all. May the death of this insignificant servant give life to my country,”—(English Translation).

Hear again what he says to his Heavenly Father,—

“Visit the ex-communicated and poor in their loneliness, O Lord, and cheer their cold desolation. Teach us to give pity and love when peace of mind has fled, and to speak sweetly unto those who suffer in mind and body. To the home of misery teach us to bring consolation, to the bed of sickness comfort, and always stand by the oppressed and deserted.”—Prayers.

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“Kindle in me, O Holy spirit, the flame of purity and piety wherewith I may kindle it in

those souls who are around me. Create in me a depth of sweetness and peace of which I may partake with others.—*Prayers.*

God has heard this prayer of Sri Keshub, and kindled in him the “flame of purity,” which is to purify and illumine the heart of Humanity gradually.

He is pure in all relations of life, and his soul is like a blazing fire.

His passion is purity, and the one prayer coming out of his heart is,—“Father let me grow from holiness to holiness, until becoming pure in heart I behold the light and glory of Thy sanctity.”—*Prayers.*

His purity presupposes the total extinction of *self*. He offers his all, whether temporal or spiritual, to the service of God, and God’s holiness becomes his nature. This means Eternal Communion with the Holy spirit.

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Sri Keshub’s life is indeed a grand synthesis, and connotes perpetual progress Heavenward. He is evergrowing in Truth, Love and Holiness—in Wisdom, Goodness and Beauty, and

advancing steadily towards Divine Perfection. Says he—

“I am steadily and continuously advancing towards *Perfection*. In childhood and in youth I have run towards it, and after death I shall have to fly thereto.”—*Jivan Veda*.

How long will Sri Keshub run in this way ? So long as he cannot reach the blissful Land of Perfection. He constantly sees that land at a distance, bright enough to attract and madden his heart. His intoxicated soul exclaims,—

“Is that the Land of Joy and Salvation, which Thou hast, oh my God, promised to weary pilgrims ? Then glory, glory, glory to Thy hallowed name ! Lord, hasten my movements and make me run, that I may soon finish my journey.”—*Prays*.

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## The High-Priest of Truth.

Brahmananda Keshub Chandra ! A man born of the Holy Spirit, and baptised in the fire of Divine Truth !

He is true to the very core ;—true in thoughts, true in words and true in actions.

The goal of his life is *Truth*, and in *Truth* is his salvation.

Verily, he is The High-Priest of Truth ! And for him to live is “*Satyam*.”

A natural *crusader* as he is, his joy is to fight against untruth and unfaith to the bitter end. Either Truth or death !—he has no other alternative. Listen to what he says,—

“The Lord is our Commander, and Truth our *Dharma*. Let the whole world stand against us, we will confound them with the War-cry “সত্যমেব জয়তে নানৃতং” and crush them. We will abandon all our earthly possessions and bodily enjoyments for the sake of *Truth*. Nay, if necessary, we would gladly sacrifice our life for the attainment of that Heavenly Nectar.”— Acharjyer Upadesh (28. 1. 1862)—(Translation).

Yes. In *Truth* is the deliverance of mankind from sin and misery. Glory to him who unfurls the white banner of *Truth*, and strong in the strength of the Almighty Lord, crushes into atoms the most impregnable strongholds of corruptions and iniquities.

2. What does Sri Keshub mean by *Truth*? “সত্যং শাস্ত্রমনন্তরম্!”

*Truth* is one eternal and unwritten Scripture which, as an echo of the Word of God, resounds louder and louder for ever in the heart of Progressive Humanity. It includes the truths of all scriptures of all ages, and gives all an everlasting basis to stand upon.

It emanates directly from the Heart of the sublime “I AM,” and can not exist in and by itself. It is like a golden ray of the sun that travels millions of miles in order to kiss the fair earth and illumine her.

It is self-evident. The only proof of its existence is that *it is*. Like light it mysteriously reveals itself and other things simultaneously.

Truth is the first principle of Religion. It descends from Heaven and hails you in the light of Faith, and you admit the celestial messenger

into your heart. It is thus divine and immutable, and beyond the inroads of matter. It deals with the everlasting *Present*, and the *Past* and the *Future* have no concern with it.

Truth is *one*, as God is *one* ; but its expressions in the universe are manifold according to the different conditions of things through which it passes. It is like sun-beam that gives life, light and beauty to all. And is not sun-beam very simple ? so white, so transparent ! But how enchanting colours of innumerable kinds spring into existence through its contact with matter in all its phases !

3. Yes ! Truth is *one*, and Truth is the natural intercommunion of the One-in-All and All-in-One.

And behold ! Truth is the very Navavidhan as proclaimed by Brahmananda Keshub Chandra,

Listen to what Sri Keshub says,—

“How glorious is Truth ! The man whose heart has Truth for its foundation achieves glory attained by the immortals. The country where the Kingdom of Truth is established becomes like Heaven a land of celestial Joy and Peace. Truth is no body’s absolute possession : Yet it is accessible to all.

“Truth has never been sold to any particular individual or community or nation. It is above the sway of time and space. It reigns supreme over all.

“Life is its habitation, as well as its exfoliation. Verily, Truth is our very life, and any deviation from it would virtually mean death...

“Wonderfully irresistible is the strength of Truth, before which the might of knowledge, wealth and health, all combined, would be of no avail. Glorious, indeed, is Truth !...

“Pure Theism is founded on Truth, and Truth is Catholic, universal and all-embracing. So, it belongs to all irrespective of time, space and condition.”—Acharjyer Upadesh.

(1st Pous, 1786 Sak).

The Man of Singular Veracity ! He never utters a word in vain. His thoughts and feelings are better than his words, his actions better than his thoughts and feelings, and his life better and sublimer than anything he outwardly does !

Let us be one with this *genuine* Man of God, and pray fervently,—

“Burn in the fulness of Thy light and reality, O Thou God of Truth. Let me live in Thee as



in a blazing fire. May Thy fire cleanse me from untruth, from sin, from selfishness, from death—moral and spiritual. O my God, be a consuming fire to me, and shine before me always in the fulness of Thy life and glory.”—*Prayers*.

Again—

“Lord, Thy religion is the religion of sober truth. It is the religion of philosophy, not of frenzy or fanaticism... Blessed be Thy name, Great Spirit, for Thou hast vouchsafed unto me a religion which is like the prophet’s live-coal of inspiration, and I live in the midst of a fire which ever burns and which nothing can put out... Good God, *I am truly Thine in faith*, and Thou hast saved me by Thy teachings.”—*Prayers*.

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## Sri Keshub Prays !

Behold the eternal ascent of The Beautiful Child of Navavidhan in a *kneeling posture* ! His white garment of sanctity flashes in the golden rays of The Sun of Righteousness. His hands are meekly folded and supplicatingly raised a little. His sweet smiling face is devoutly turned Heavenward like a blooming lotus. And his eyes of Faith and Trust lovingly look up towards the Eternal and Infinite One who shines for ever as The True, The Good, The Beautiful.

### He is The Praying Keshub.

Yes. Sri Keshub prays ! And as he prays, he unconsciously grows in Faith, Love and Purity, and gradually approaches Divinity without ceasing.

He looks up to God *in prayer*, and receives His holy light. He profoundly feels the efficacy of prayer in his own experience, and most earnestly and zealously sticks to it.

Verily, it is from God that he spontaneously receives the secret of his ever-progressive spiritual life, and *that is prayer*. Says he—

“The first lesson from the scriptures of my life is *Prayer*. When no one helped me, when I did not enter the membership of any religious society, did not examine the merits of religious systems, or adopt any as my own ; when I did not resort to the company of any believers or devotees ; in that dawn of my spiritual life, the Voice that sounded in my heart was ‘*pray ! pray !*’... I never knew very well why or for what I should pray, that was not the time to reason....*I did pray* :...In laying the foundation of a house, who thinks of its future beauty ?...‘Offer prayer ; thou shalt be saved ; what thou wantest thou shalt get ;’ this Voice sounded from the east and west of my life, from the north and south. Prayer is man’s guide, prayer is the endless helper. This one thing (prayer) I knew, I knew naught else...From the first, I had recourse to that supplication before God, which is greater than *Veda* or *Vedanta*, *Koran* or *Puran* ; to *prayer* I held fast...I have faith in *prayer*, and hence my life is what it is.”—*Jivan Veda*.

What is “*this Prayer ?*”

1. It is, as verified in the life of Sri Keshub, a Godward attitude of the soul,—“an attitude indicative of reverent humility and complete

self-surrender." It implies two things at the same time : Human helplessness on the one hand, and Divine Grace on the other. The poor suffering soul meekly kneels down and trustfully looks up to God for help ; and it is spontaneously given.

Verily, *Prayer* and *Inspiration* are only two sides of the same thing which is *Divine Grace*.

God incites, and man asks. Man asks, and God gives. The grace of God, therefore, is the Law of Prayer, as well as its fulfilling.

2. It means a longing of the Soul ; it is the wish felt,—it may be expressed or not expressed. God looks into the depths of the heart, and sees the spirit in which the Soul offers prayer. Whether expressed or unexpressed, a *prayer* is alike real and sincere if God hears it and accepts it and automatically responds to it.

3. It is the silent ceaseless cry of an imprisoned soul for liberation,—an intense longing for the Eternal Reality that gleams beyond,—the eager looking through the key-hole and rapturous gazing at the One Solitary Star of undefinable glory, that shines high up in the Centre of the Ethereal Sky far far away.

4. It is the crystal tear of Love on which are

reflected all the beauties and sublimities of Heaven.

5. *Prayer* is the last grand effort of Humanity for *Mukti*,—an eternal leap from untruth to Truth, from darkness to Perpetual Light, from death to Immortality, from discord and disruption to Divine Harmony and Synthetic Unity.

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This is what Sri Keshub means by True Prayer, and he himself is nothing if not *Prayer incarnate*. His life is, indeed, one continuous flow of *Prayer*, which in its onward course through ever-growing Faith, Love and Purity gradually widens and deepens and ultimately becomes one with the eternal Godward progress of Humanity.

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## The Singular Man of Faith.

Sri Brahmananda Keshub Chandra is what he is from nature,—a Singular Man of Faith. It is easy to distinguish his singularity, but most difficult to comprehend the mysterious workings of his *Faith*.

His life and teachings unmistakably show that Divine Revelation and Human Perception are both eternally progressive, and that they are only two sides of the same thing, which is *Faith* ?

What does Sri Keshub mean by *this Faith* ?

“It is the science or the laws according to which Divine dealings with human beings take place. These laws can only be known by continued prayerfulness. It includes every detail of life, and regulates the smallest matters of conduct. It rises in the heart as an impulse sometimes, but bears testimony to itself in surrounding circumstances, and surely achieves victory in the end. Nothing is so exact as *Faith*.”—*The New Dispensation*.

According to him, the first indispensable condition towards the acquirement of *Faith* is the

*purity of conscience.* Some of the other conditions are *absolute self-surrender, calmness of heart, and service,* None but the chosen and accepted servant of God can have faith in him.

This is *true Faith*, and the All-merciful God has given Sri Keshub this Heavenly thing in abundance. Verily, *Faith* is the basis of his spiritual existence, and to him always a realized Providence.

No wonder, therefore, that he should be a man of the rarest type. He is undoubtedly *not* as ordinary men are. He does not belong to any particular community, sect or denomination. He belongs to all, and all claim him as their own.

His *Faith* is not fully formed yet. He is ever-growing, and so those who knew him yesterday, know him not to-day ;—He is ever *new*. It is for this reason that the world generally misunderstands him, and grossly misrepresents his *Faith* and conduct.

This is the reward Sri Keshub receives for his being always true to God and true to his own Mission. But his mind is not perturbed ; he simply says,—

“It seems strange that a living man, whose practices and speculations have been before the

public for a considerable length of time, should have his creed and his character so wantonly misrepresented. Am I not accessible to all ? Is it not possible to apply crucial tests to my character and conduct ? Is my theology a hidden thing ? Is my creed an enigma and mystery ? Is it not possible for the public to understand who and what I am ?” —*Am I An Inspired Prophet ?*

Strange indeed ! But I have already said that Sri Keshub is a Man of Singular Faith ; and a man of singular faith is destined to be always “wantonly misrepresented.” He himself gives the reason,—

“The world can not discern *Faith* when it lies too near. And it requireth due distance to lend clearness to the sight. Hence it is that the prophet who is hated and condemned at home is honoured abroad, and while the land of his birth denies him, distant nations gratefully acknowledge him as their own.” —*True Faith.*

Sri Keshub is still an inexplicable riddle to us. The impenetrable veil of mystery that shrouds his inner life has not yet been withdrawn. The *hidden man* in him is not yet revealed. The world must still wait.



Sri Keshub is a child of the *Past*, and at the same time a child of the *Future*. He moves in an eccentric orbit of his own, and appears upon the stage of History in an apparently irregular way. He stands with his one hand grasping the remote *Future*, and with his other the dim by-gone *Past*, his eyes all the while remaining fixed on the ever-living *Present*. The *Present* of Sri Keshub is but the harmony of the *Past* and the *Future*. He summons Ancient Time to come into Modern Time with all its asceticism and communion, and what a marvellous and awe-inspiring resurrection ! His prophetic soul moves forward, and lifts the veil of an unborn age, and what a grand and glorious revelation ! He lives in the *Past*, and the *Past* lives in him. He lives in the *Future*, and the *Future* will unfold him. What seems to be a dull lifeless thing to others is a living and life-giving truth to him ; and what others would require hundreds of years to grasp and realise is an accomplished fact to him. Listen to what he says,—

“You speak of *History*. I hate dead history. I abhor those places where dead men’s bones are gathered. Those dismal and dark places I abominate and detest...The Bible has never of

itself animated or inspired any one, nor can it. But the spirit of God converts its dead letters into living ideas. The characters recorded there are dumb and lifeless, but awakened by the Holy Spirit, they start up as living beings. The historical characters that came to me were all fire. Their spirits forcibly entered my soul. Could I resist them? Could I cast them away as mere dead men's shadows in history or as metaphysical abstractions? There they were. Here they are now with me, in me. *Always in my blood and in my bones the prophets dwell.* Therefore to me it is all demonstration."—

*Am I An Inspired Prophet?*

He says again,—

“Though living in the nineteenth century, I go back to the mystic age to drink of the pure fountain of Yoga-communion there. I go to the Aryan Yogis of Ancient India to learn contemplation.”—

Thus Sri Keshub lives in the *Past*.

Hear again what he says in *Shebaker Nibedan*, while addressing the Man of Navavidhan,—

“Oh Child of the *Future*, thy time is not yet. Calcutta or any other city in the world is not

thy native land. Thy life is not the life of the present century. Many centuries must pass away before thy time comes.”—(Translation)

Who is this “Child of the *Future*?” The answer is evidently known to all. So, we see that Sri Keshub is born ahead of his age.

Oh what a strange anomaly ! Men mark this, and are naturally puzzled. Thy try to solve this problem according to their own ordinary rules, and they fail. The arithmetic which guides the world is never accepted by him. He says in *Jivan Veda*,—

“Very wonderful is the arithmetic of my life. I put no faith in the arithmetic that rules the world. The manner and customs of the country from which I come do not agree with those you see here.”

Sri Keshub’s inner life is thus not controlled by the codes of this world. He comes from a strange land with a strange science of his own. And the welcome given him is what might be expected : it is lionization and deification on the one hand, and persecution and villification on the other. But he is generally more honoured and appreciated abroad, and more abused and ignored in his own country. I need not cite examples

here, which are innumerable. Sri Keshub receives all these contradictory and conflicting judgments of his age with perfect equanimity of heart. He only smiles and moves forward, onward and Heavenward, He says,—

“Do not tell me the honour which the world has given me has turned my head, If the honour has turned my head one way, my sorrows and trials have turned it the other way ; so that somehow Providence has managed to keep my head in equilibrium.”

—*We Apostles of the New Dispensation.*

From what I have stated above I cannot but naturally come to the conclusion that Sri Keshub is not as ordinary men are. Yes ! He is decidedly a *Singular Man*. He himself proclaims this before vast assemblies. “I am a singular man,” says he ; “I am not as ordinary men are, and I say this deliberately, I say this candidly.”—have we any right to set at naught a declaration pronounced in such a way and by such a man ? I would say *No* ! Keshub must be understood by his own interpretations. To disbelieve his words would be to disbelieve him, and kill the whole man. If he is anything *he is real*. He utters

all earthly comforts. I wanted nothing else but the kingdom of Heaven, but I soon found I had got everything necessary for my temporal as well as spiritual welfare. This *Singular Faith* in a singularly jealous God of Heaven brought me day and day nearer to Him, and further and further from wordliness.....I was no longer a child of sorrow, burning in the midst of trial and tribulation. The benignant face of my Father shone forth on my face, and His loving kindness wiped off the tears from my cheeks, and I felt happy. My days were pleasant. My nights were no longer nights of unrest and trouble, but nights of serenity, peace, and joy.”—

*Am I An Inspired Prophet ?*

Is not the *Faith* of Sri Keshub wonderfully singular ? We now come to his *Mission* :

The *mission* of Sri Keshub is to proclaim through his life and character *the unity of God in Man* and *unity of Man in God*. Let us explain the significance of this *double unity*.

“The unity of God in *Man* : ” What does it mean ? It is a different thing from *the unity of God in God Himself*, The former means the unity of manifested and revealed God, and the latter, the unity of God hid in himself. The one is the

unity of God in what we call His Dispensation, and the other, the unity in His hidden Personality. It is not the mission of Sri Keshub to preach the unity of “অজ্ঞেয়,” “নিগুণ,” and “তটস্থ” Brahma. That was done by the venerable Yogis and Rishis of ancient time. The Rig Veda thus sings the unity of unmanifested God,—

“There was neither Aught nor  
 Naught nor air nor sky beyond.  
 What covered all ? Where rested all ?  
 In watery gulf profound ?  
 Nor death was there, nor deathlessness,  
 No change of night and day.  
*That One* breathed calmly self-sustained ;  
 Naught else beyond It lay.”—

Such was the sublime and awe-inspiring song that Ancient India sang from the peak of the Himalayas, thousands of years ago, in praise of the Eternal and Infinite One. It echoed in the hills of ancient Persia, Babelonia, Assyria and China, and even now reverberates in the heart of Modern Science and Civilization !

But Sri Keshub's Mission is to proclaim the unity of the revealed God,—of the One Supreme Person gradually manifested in eternally progressive Humanity. The proclamation of God's

continuous revelation in undivided and indivisible Humanity is the be-all and end-all of his mission, and the burden of his life-song. This is what he means by "Navavidhan." It is to him the harmony of all religions and all prophets.

Sri Keshub's *One God* is "not a logical or historical deity," but the "ever-living and ever-present Reality, who in time is always *now* and in space always *here*, and who in ineffable beauty shines within and without as the Life of life.

*His God is personal*, and his relation with Him most intimate and loving. He dedicates his whole life,—body and soul,—unto this near and dear Deity who is true, good and beautiful, Says he,—

"To me the Lord is all in all. In the agony of conscious sin I first fell at His feet and cried unto Him, and He heard my prayers ; He delivered me from darkness. Now I am a captive before my Father's throne, held in the chains of ever-lasting love."—*Psalms*.

This *faith* of Sri Keshub in *Divine Grace* is the root of his spiritual life, and the secret of his growth. It means "direct vision" of God and immortality. It is the Light of Heaven first revealed to him through *Prayer*. It shines upon

him with all its brilliancy when he sacrifices his "*self*" and the world on the altar of God." It gradually unfolds his being, and makes him what he is. It is to him—"perpetual progress Heavenward."

In this way is the Supreme Spirit revealed in Sri Keshub's own life. Is He revealed alone? Listen to what the *New Seer* says,—

"I have ventured to take the dial off this universe, and the wondrous things that lay concealed therein have been revealed. Now I ask Thee, O Spirit Supreme, is there any one else with Thee, or art Thou alone, sitting in solitary glory?...Behold a whole family of saints and prophets, all united with each other and united in the Lord! Not only is Christ there, but there are also Moses and Elias, and all the Jewish prophets of olden times, and Paul and all the apostles. And Chaitanya, too, the blessed prophet of Nadia, and the immortal Sakya Muni, and Confucius, Zoroaster too. All our masters are there assembled. Oh blessed confraternity of disembodied souls! How they all shine in the light of the Central Sun and reflect His glory!"—

*God-vision In The Nineteenth Century.*



Is Sri Keshub favoured alone with this glorious vision ? Hear what he says,—

“See how the Lord of Heaven and earth is revealing Himself. He reveals Himself unto us to-day as He revealed Himself three thousand years ago to Moses...The Lord will surely vouchsafe unto us the light and power of His inspiration. In the light of true science the Lord our God will reveal Himself to all His children, and unite us in God-vision in one blessed family.”—

*God-Vision In The Nineteenth Century.*

Sri Keshub never believes that God in selecting him for special mercies has denied other men of this and other countries His favour. His revealed God is the revealed God of all men of all countries and all ages. He says,—

“With God there can be no one-sidedness, no partiality. The Dispensations of Divine Mercy are all-inclusive, not exclusive. They embrace all mankind, and exclude none. The redeeming mercy of Heaven is no respecter of persons. It knows no favouritism. It is universal and eternal.”—*Behold The Light Of Heaven In India.*

But is this Eternal Providence working in an irregular and, so to say, unscientific way for the redemption of Mankind ? No. Sri Keshub says,—

“Providence works not by fits and starts, now here, now there, now asleep, now active ; but it works unceasingly and everywhere for the benefit of all created beings. But while it works for the general welfare of all, it works in a special manner in special cases...These special dispensations of Providence differ, indeed, and must differ, according to the peculiarities of each nation, but they never jar with one another. They can not clash, though apparently dissimilar. They are all the harmonious outcome of that universal economy of redemption which will one day establish the kingdom of Heaven on earth.”—

*God-vision In The Nineteenth Century.*

He says again,—

“All these dispensations are connected with one another in the economy of Providence. They are linked together in one continuous chain which may be traced to the earliest age.”—

*We Apostles Of The New Dispensation.*

This singular vision of One Eternal Person moving in Humanity, and working out its redemption, throughout all ages, with a logical unity of idea and method, and in an unbroken continuity of sequence, is Sri Keshub's *God-Vision*. It brings to light the grand truth that Divine

Revelation and Human evolution are both eternally progressive, the latter being a consequent of the former. He hails this New Light as *Navavidhan* in which all other Dispensations are harmonised, and resolved into a scientific unity.

Sri Keshub's Faith is thus *singular*, particularly because of the fact that it is *absolutely synthetical*. I shall try to throw more light on this point later on.

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## Sri Keshub Loves.

Brahmananda Keshub Chandra is the living exponent of *Love*. He naturally and spontaneously loves God, and to *love* God is to *love* Man; because Humanity is only an expression of Divinity.

This *love* is well-grounded upon the rock of Truth, and destined to stand firm through everlasting ages. It embraces all the departments of his life, and is the end of all his thoughts, of all his words, and of all his actions. It connotes not only complete self-surrender to the Holy Spirit, but also carrying out his precepts into practice intellectually, devotionally and emotionally.

His Gospel is the *love of God* which saves all. Listen to what he says,—

“Through love is man saved. From that little word you might evolve a whole volume of saving theological literature. In it lies in a concentrated form the whole doctrine of our duties to God and man. True love is salvation. He that hath love hath God in him.”—

*Behold The Light Of Heaven In India.*

What does *this* “Love” truly mean? Let us see :

1. *Love* is ineffable. It can better be felt and realised through internal persuasion than explained by any outward sign or symbol.

The nature of *Love* is to attract and unite, and to reduce multiplicity to unity. *Love* is nothing if not a thorough unification of different spirits.

2. *Love* is Heaven-born, and beyond the influence of this material world. Its only *Mantra* is, “সত্যম্! শিবম্! সুন্দরম্!”—“The True! The Good! The Beautiful!”

“The True” is always good, and “The Good” always beautiful. Is it not a fact that whatever is beautiful is always attractive and fascinating?

3. Verily, *Love* is a ray of Divine Beauty reflected on the Human Heart, and automatically converted into a holy passion for the Beautiful One who is so true and so good. It illumines everything within and without, and the whole universe comes to be a bright reflex of *The Wonderful Person*.

The votary finds himself suddenly “smitten,” and he can not help crying,—

“O my Lord, I am Thine, and Thou art mine for ever !”

Henceforward, the only course left to him is to snap the bonds of the world and give up all that he owns in order to attach himself entirely to the Lord.

So, as a homeless pilgrim, he wanders about in all parts of the wide wide world in quest of Him. This journey never ends, but is eternal.

4. *Love* is ever young, and has no concern with the tricks or frolics of Time and Space. It naturally seeks a cool shelter of ever-greens deep down in the heart, and there leads a pure arca-dian life in company with the *Beautiful One*.

It gives an experience unalloyed, simple, selfless, unbroken and always expansive.

5. *Love* is always alone,—alone with *The Alone*. It always thinks of the “Beloved One” alone, and desires to live with Him alone. It looks up to Him alone for sympathy and support,—for consolation, peace and joy.

Its cry of distress is,—

“Oh my Beloved ! where art Thou ? My heart pants after Thee !”

Its cry of joy is,—

“Oh my Beloved ! *Here* art Thou ! I *have* *Thee* at last ! How happy—how happy am I !”

The darkness disappears. And the Light of Heaven shines gloriously.

6. *Love* is the music of Divine Life. It is ever inspiring and refreshing, and constantly exerts a rejuvenating influence on every mind it comes across. It chastens all, ennobles all, transfigures all. It makes us imperceptively conscious of the superlative goodness of God, and of the sweetness of His dealings with us.

7. *Love* is a spark of the Grace of God, that kindles whatever it touches ; and the whole world is moved to rapture !

8. Love is divinely sweet, and makes everything delicious and delightful to the inner senses. So, to *love* is to enjoy heavenly felicity. Who will deny that in *true love* there is deep and unutterable joy ? *Love* is indeed its own reward.

9. Is it really possible for *Love* to live apart from the Lord even for a moment ? Impossible. God is of *Love*, and *Love* is of God for ever. This perpetual union gradually deepens, ripens and sweetens ; and in its maturest condition

*Love* mingles with God and loses its own entity. So, True Faith can not help declaring that ‘God is Love !’

10. God is indeed Love, and Love is all-embracing. So, to dwell in God is to dwell in all. Is it a fact that you have *Love* ? Then you have God-with-all in you.

11. Brahmananda Keshub Chandra says,—  
“True Love is a pilgrim that has left home and gone away never to return.”—*Behold The Light Of Heaven In India*.

This signifies the life-journey of *Love*. The starting point is complete self-sacrifice, and the progress is through gradual dedication to the service of the Lord. But *Love* can never rest satisfied with service alone. Its destination is the Lord Himself, and it must meet Him and be one with Him.

*Love* is higher and nobler than *service*. Is not service only a faint expression of *Love* ?

12. Verily, *Love* is deeper and sublimer than even *meditation* ; for who can deny that *meditation* proves only a blind helpless guide



unless *Love* reveals the hidden way leading to God ?

13. God is the be-all and end-all of *Love*, and it is He under Whose smiles it grows and expands for ever. It finds its final rest in Him alone.

14. *Love* is life eternal. Its prime source is the Divine Heart, and its expression is this *creation*. So, to live is to *love*.

15. God is perfect, and *Love* perfect only in faith and adoration.

God is eternal and infinite, and *Love* eternally progressive, its scope being illimitable.

Love opens the way to God, and through God to man ; so, it is the means of *salvation*.

Love makes man one with Divinity, and through Divinity one with Humanity : so, it is itself *salvation*.

And what is Navavidhan ? Is not *Love* its Guiding Principle ?

Listen ! Sri Keshub prays !—

“Loving God, how sweet is it to love ! How happy he who loves ! I have tasted the sweets of

*Love* through Thy Grace. I pray I may learn at Thy feet to love yet more warmly and tenderly. May my love grow and expand day after day, embracing friends and foes, men of my faith and country, men of other persuasion and countries, all sects and communities without prejudice.”—

*Prayers.*

Again —

“God of Love, teach us to walk in the path of evergrowing love. The way of love is the way of eternal progress, There is no end of love. Immerse us into the fullest measure of Thy love. Nothing short of perfect love for Thee can save us. Do Thou graciously help us to enjoy Thee continually in secret.”—*Prayers.*

This intense desire to enjoy God-in-Man and Man-in-God “continually in secret,” leads Sri Keshub to *Holy Communion*. The universal Lover develops into a Singular Yogi !

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## Sri Keshub Communes.

Behold the New Yogi of the New Age !—The veritable House-Holder in ecstatic communion with the Eternal and Infinite Spirit ! His attitude most natural and easy. His eyes open and turned Heavenward. His inner being vivified and sublimated by God-consciousness. His whole features radiant with Divine Joy !

Yes. Sri Keshub communes, and he can not help doing so. The destiny calls him, and he spontaneously responds.

He is constitutionally a Man of Faith. As his *faith* is singular, and means *direct vision of God*, it is natural that it should imperceptively lead him to *Love*, and that *Love* should make him *one* with God-in-All and All-in-God ; because God is *Love*, and Love is all-embracing.—*This union* is the beginning of *Holy Communion*.

His love-intoxicated soul pants after this *communion* day and night. He longs to mingle with Him and lose himself entirely in His Holy Embrace. So, he draws his heart away from all

sensible objects and temporal thoughts, and gives himself up to solitude and silence. He takes a long—long—plunge into the boundless Deep within, and finds an ideal *Hermitage* on the shore of Eternity. He enters the inner chamber which is dark, and sits in *Samadhi*.

*There* all is still, tranquil and serene. Adrift on the stream of meditation is he carried to where he knows not. Nothing seems to exist now. Within and without rolls the sea of *Nirvan*. Anon, the Infinite bursts upon his view like a lightning flash in the dark midnight sky, and fills the void.

The Yogi is alone with *The Alone*, and *The Alone* shines as something awfully real. From the depth of his *being* this Sublime Presence rises high as the Fountain of vitality, It draws near and nearer as the *Presence* of *One* who is nearest and dearest. Deeper penetration makes the vision brighter, and at last the *Presence* is transformed into a *Living and Loving Person*.

The Supreme Spirit gradually overwhelms the Yogi by His majesty, chastens him by His holiness and enchants his heart by His goodness and beauty. Thus overpowered, purified, captivated and entranced, he sinks deep in the sweetness of Divine Embrace never to rise again,

Then his joy knows no bound, and his enraptured soul ejaculates,—

“Thou in me and I in Thee. This, this, O Eternal Spirit, is my *Heaven*. No other Heaven do I seek. Grant, O Lord, that I may always find myself immersed in Thee, and Thy Spirit rooted in the depth of my heart. In such profound inter-communion Thy unworthy child shall find joy unutterable.”— *Prayers*.

Again—

“Thy communion is my promised Land of Joy and Liberty. I am no longer a dweller of this vain earth. Father, always keep me within the circle of Thy wide communion, so that mine eyes may ceaselessly behold the light of Thy salvation and grace”.— *Prayers*.

The communion goes on, and the Yogi goes down and down into the very depths of Eternal Existence. And Lo ! a glorious spectacle opens before his eyes. A transfiguration all around ! The universe is unveiled. He sees how the Holy Spirit far away in the stillness of the *sanctum sanctorum* is secretly working out His wise and beneficent purposes, and moving the mysterious machine of the vast solar and stellar

systems. A Heavenly Hand upholds all things. The Living Deity is in everything, and everything is in Him. He is the immanent power of the whole creation and its in-dwelling life.

The Yogi's vision grows wider and brighter. He clearly perceives that the Infinite Spirit who seems to dwell alone in the sanctuary of the Human Soul, hid in His Own Glory, is not only manifested in *Nature* but in *History* also. "He who created and upholds the vast universe, also governs the destinies and affairs of nations. The same hand which we trace in the lily and the rose, in rivers and mountains, in the movements of the planets and the surges of the sea, regulates the economy of human society, and works, unseen, amid its mighty revolutions, its striking vicissitudes, and its progressive movements".

This is Sri Keshub's *Yoga*, subjective and objective. First, *within*; and then naturally *from within to without*. But is there really any difference between the *two*? The answer is, *No*! The "*Without*" is only a reflex of the "*Within*."

2. Sri Keshub is not a born Yogi. As stated above, he descended into the scene of action

with that Heavenly thing called *Faith* which spontaneously led him to *Bhakti* (Love of God), and then to *Yoga*. Says he in his *Jivan Veda*,—

“As *Bhakti*, the love of God, has been with me an acquired virtue, so also *Yoga*, union with the Spirit of God. In the early days of my religious life, I did not know what *Yoga* was. Years passed away in the pursuit of *Truth*, in the discipline of *Asceticism*, and by the grace of God atlast *Bhakti* presented itself in my heart. This *Bhakti* was in the course of time turned into inebriation in God’s love. As the love of God grew in me, I felt, however, that to make it permanent it was necessary to have *Yoga*. If you have *faith* in God, you must be one with him. The heart should be the lover of God, the eye should behold the Spirit of God in everything. *Bhakti* and *Yoga* thus both presented themselves in my view. As the grace of God descended unto me in the shape of *Bhakti*, so some wind that blew from some other direction brought to me *Yoga*. When I got both, I could distinguish the one as *Bhakti* and the other as *Yoga*. The one sweetened my spiritual union with God, the other turned my devotions into reverence and awe. The one served to

establish my love of God on the ground of *Faith*, the other served to shed the waters of sweetness on my spiritual union. What is *Yoga*? Such intimate union with the indwelling Spirit of God that the instant any object is perceived, God is perceived in it. Like a blazing fire I behold God on all sides; like a blowing storm I feel Him pressing upon my flesh and blood. I felt the Spirit to be near; I went still nearer; I touched the Spirit; I became one with the Spirit. Thus my *Yoga* became deeper. The Spirit of God and my own self are now woven together. The two objects have united into one, and the one can not be denied without denying the other.”—*Jivan Veda*

3. Sri Keshub's *Yoga* is vitally connected with his spiritual existence. It is as natural and spontaneous as breathing. Listen to what the New Yogi says,—

“I am not a recluse. My habitation is in the midst of a populous city. Yet in such a place I manage to ply the Yogi's trade. Humble is my *Yoga*, and sober. Yet I profit by it, and I rejoice in it. To me Yogi life is awfully real, and yet so deliciously sweet. I sit before my God, and see the Eternal face to face, and I



smile and feel excessively happy. This is my *Yoga*; I pant for nothing more. I make no effort. I do not pass through laborious and artificial processes of concentration. I observe an easy posture, and cherish an easy mind. My God-consciousness is the whole philosophy of my *Yoga* and in this alone I realise abundant joy. I sit. I am conscious of the *presence* of my God, and I smile. The secret of the whole thing lies in *seeing* God, or such a vivid and immediate realization of the Divine Presence as would enable one to feel that he is actually seeing the Spirit Face. When this is done, *Yoga* becomes as simple and easy as breath."—*The Yogi*.

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# The Great Awakener.

## I. The Mysterious Voice.

When slumbering India lay enveloped in thick folds of darkness like an inert mass, a *Voice* came down from the Himalayas and touched Her inner consciousness :

“Sons and Daughters of India, dearly beloved brethren,—Awake, arise ; the blessed morning of your redemption is come. The Great God, our Merciful Father, standeth at your doors with the treasures of redeeming grace in His hand, and summoneth you to rise. Delay not then, but obey The Holy Call instantly. Rise from your death-like sleep ; let your ears hear the joyful sound of salvation ; let your eyes drink the sweet light of the new day ; let your lips praise the Redeemer’s name. Long, too long have you slept ; long have you borne the oppressions and cruelties of a heartless hierarchy, with hands and feet enchained in the gloomy prison-cell of superstition. Long have you suffered from acute moral diseases and spiritual poverty. The cup of your sufferings is brimful. Your condition is truly pitiable. It

draws tears from human eyes. And shall Infinite Mercy look on with indifference and apathy ? No, it can not be. Your wailings and lamentations have penetrated the vaults of Heaven and reached the Father's ears, and he hath hastened to relieve and rescue those that have cried unto Him. Beloved India, Thy night of darkness and sorrow is over. Sing the Father's mercy, all ye men and women of India. Sing, mountains and hills, rivers, streams, forests and plains, cities and villages. Ye winds of heaven, carry the message of His redeeming mercy in all directions. May He bless my humble Voice and stir up a response in every heart ! Blessed be the Holy and Merciful God for ever !"—

*The Voice From The Himalayas (Sept. 1868)*

It is the *Voice* of Brahmananda Keshub Chandra, and its effect is miraculous : India awakes, opens Her eyes wonderingly and witnesses after a long decade the glorious sun-rise,—the rise of the Sun of Navavidhan ! She spontaneously arises, and gives a warm heartfelt response to the *Call*. Hear what the famous patriot and orator Surendra Nath Banerji says about this "Great Revival."—

"He [ Sri Keshub ] was the author of a great

revival. He called forth into vigorous life the dormant moral and religious instincts of his countrymen. His was the word that broke the spell, that roused the sleeper from his sleep, and communicated the flutter of new life into an all but dead system."

Sri Keshub himself gives the following testimony about his *Calling*,—

"I am called to awaken the world, and from my early boyhood before I joined any church or any community, I tried to awaken men. I had neither any congregation nor any followers then ; so I addressed the passers-by ; without name, without method I spoke to those who walked through the streets, and they heeded me not. Then when I got a handful of boys to listen to me I tried to awaken them with all my might. Then when I had an audience I spoke with still greater zeal. Next I began to preach, and shop-keepers and the common people, as well as the wise and educated, were the objects of my ministry. And now when almost the whole world has heard my *Voice* in city-squares and river-sides I try to awaken vast crowds who come to hear me. I will continue to call and awaken as long as my *voice* is left to me."—*The Apostle's Calling*.

What is the secret of this great influence which Sri Keshub exerts upon the world ? He is not a scholar ; he is not a theologian ; neither is he a philosopher nor a scientist. And it is an admitted fact that he is not “a highly-finished orator, capable of delighting an audience of dilettantes with finished period of artistic rhetoric.” Yet the world thrills to *his Voice* ! What is the secret of this *mysterious Voice* ?

Let us try to indicate an answer to this question :

## II. The Mouth-piece of God.

Truly does Robert Knight say,—

“When Keshub speaks the world listens.”

And no wonder. Because, it is really Keshub's God Who speaks through him.

This is a fact which a seer like Sri Ramkrishna affirms in unmistakable terms. One day a disciple of the great Saint said to him that the words falling from the lips of Keshub Chandra Sen were wonderfully sweet and inspiring. Sri Ramkrishna answered with a smile,—

“ও কি আর তাঁর কথা ? ও সবই ভগবানের ! কেশব তো বাঘের মুখ !” ( অর্থাৎ বাঘের মুখবিশিষ্ট জলের কল ) ।

A channel indeed through which the Word of God flows !

There is no denying the fact that Sri Keshub is the chosen Mouth-piece of God in Modern Age. Hear what he himself says,—

“If the burning word of truth I speak are words of mine, I am an impostor. If the Lord chooses to speak through my tongue, to Him must I give all honour and glory. Then I am all fire, and I can speak not only eloquently, but I can speak the words of pure wisdom and truth. My Father’s eloquence makes me eloquent.”—

*Am I An Inspired Prophet ?*

Sri Ramkrishna is not the only person who bears testimony to this fact. I shall cite here some more instances :

The Hon’ble Mr. Justice N. G. Chanda Varkar, B. A., L. L. B., renowned social reformer, said on 20th. Nov. 1904,—

“I have heard several orators both in this country and in England ; but Keshub Chander Sen’s oratory stands distinguished in my memory by the fact that it was the oratory of a God-inspired man. It is as a God-inspired man that Keshub Chunder Sen deserves to live immortal in the hearts of his countrymen.”

T. E. Stephens, Esq., J- C., of the London National Liberal Club, who had the advantage of coming into close personal contact with Sri Keshub during his stay in England, speaks of the latter's first public address at the Liverpool Institution Hall.—

“Throughout this never-to-be-forgotten oration he held his audience spell-bound and enraptured. His voice so melodious and persuasive, seemed like music to responsive ears ; and his words themselves at times were heard as if they were descending from a region of light and glory which the audience had not before experienced.”

The Hon'ble Mr. Jogendranath Ghose, M.A., B. L., says,—

“New India responded to the call of Keshub, and Englishmen gave him their unstinted sympathy. His fame spread far and wide ; and his marvellous eloquence made him the most commanding figure in India. I saw him speak in the Town Hall—a true King of men. Rammohan Roy was, as MaxMuller called him, Rex King ; but he was the intellectual king only. Keshub alone was the king of the heart of New India.”

Swami Vivekananda says,—

“The genuine orator exercises a sort of hypnotism over his audience. I have listened to many orators, Indian, English and American ; but Keshub Chunder Sen is easily the greatest of them all.”

The ‘hypnotism’ referred to above is, in the case of Sri Keshub, not at all artificial, but positively a natural effect of *Inspiration* which is everything with him,—his life, his growth, his power, his fervour, his eloquence. It is undoubtedly as a “God-inspired man” that he will live immortal in the heart of Mankind.

Sri Keshub Chandra is to me a “Voice In The Air.” I pay my homage to this *Voice*, because it is in reality a spontaneous echo of the Eternal and Omni-present Word of God, and because under the secret workings of Providence it has now become the *voice* of New India. Glory to God, and glory to this God-possessed Man !

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## The Prophet of Synthetic Unity.

The Eternal and Infinite *One* is the be-all and end-all of Sri Keshub's spiritual existence, and the burden of his life-song is One God, One Man, One Religion and One Path of Salvation. Says he,—

“The whole humanity is *one*, and there is no room for *me* or *us*. Up above in Heaven there is *One God*, and down below on earth there is *One man*.”—*Prayers*.

*Religion* also can not but be *one* as it is simply the connecting link between the *two*. Moreover, being itself a science it naturally tends to *unity*. Listen to Sri Keshub's prayer,—

“Lord, make us *one man* and *one Church* in Thee, that we may think, speak and act in all essential matters ever in harmony and unity according to the purposes of Thy Dispensation, and unto the glory of Thy holy name.”—*Prayers*.

Verily, Sri Keshub is the Prophet of Synthetic Unity. He naturally values synthesis above analysis, one above many, and unity above anything else. Hear what he says,—

“Trifle not with *unity*. In the logic of *Synthesis* is the world's redemption. In unity is science. And in unity too is salvation”.—

*We Apostles Of The New Dispensation.*

Sri Keshub's 'Synthesis' is not the so-called "Eclecticism" or the collection of truth, but the *unification* of truth. He believes in the *unity of all truth*. And this *unity* is not a philosophical attempt but a *spiritual fact of his Inner Life*. To him the leading principles of all religions form *One Ideal* which necessarily includes all the ideals of the world. It is the harmony of Scriptures and of prophets, saints and seers.

Sri Keshub's calling is to be a peace-maker. Says he,—

“ My calling is to be a peace-maker. I must endeavour to unite the small fragments of faith and doctrine on all sides into a complete system and structure of God's Dispensation, which with His inspiring and revealing breath will reconcile the past with the present, the primitive with the modern, faith with science, the East with the West. With no phase of Hindu faith and Mythology can I dare to trifle. To no doctrine or belief of Christian theology can I dare to be indifferent. Buddhism has for me a charm which

is truly divine. And to me Mahomed is a servant and great Apostle of God. Out of spiritual necessity I have to recognise all this, to organise all this, to bind all these together : it is not I who bind them, *but God who binds them in me.* I can afford to treat no religious ideal with contempt. I must gather up all the grains of spiritual sustenance which my Father and Master has scattered around me. *I must unite all, reconcile all, bind all. This is my calling.*

—*New Dispensation.*

I have stated above that the burden of Sri Keshub's life-song is "*One God, One Man and One religion.*" Let us see what this *Unity* means :

## I. "One God".

Sri Keshub speaks of the *oneness* of God thus,—

"Do not break but unite. Unite in a personal unity the various fragments of a divided Deity scattered broadcast over the world, and adored separately in different ages, in different schools of religion and philosophy. Bring all these broken units into one focus, and you will

see in this beautiful synthesis a perfect and harmonious whole, the very Living God of the universe,...not the pantheist's God, not the idolater's God, not the metaphysician's God, but the true personal God, full of wisdom and love, full of power and holiness, and perfect. This is the God of all eternity, the God of the entire universe."

*God-vision In The Nineteenth Century.*

Hear again,—

"God is the grandest and sublimest synthesis, the harmony of all truth, and the unity of all goodness. He is One Person around Whom gather various attributes. Thirty three millions of divinities, the endless permutations and combinations of these varied attributes, are the multiplicity of theology, to which the unscientific polythiest pays homage. But the scientific monothiest worships the Supreme One amid His many attributes and manifestations. Monotheism represents the science of religion, the philosophy of God-consciousness, the logic of synthesis. If you stop at analysis, and deal only with broken fragments of Divine attributes, you are as disloyal to science as you are to theology. Carry back these fragments into the indivisible unity

of the Divine Person, and you have vindicated both Science and religion”

—*We Apostles of the N. D.*

This is Sri Keshub's One God,—the One Living and Loving God of the entire universe,—the one undivided and indivisible person revealed in undivided and indivisible Humanity. This God is to him neither a dogma nor a lifeless doctrine, but an ever-living and ever-present Reality,—*The Sublime “I Am.”*

## II. One Religion—One Path of Salvation.

Sri Keshub speaks of ‘One Religion’,—

“Come then to the synthetic unity of the New Dispensation. You will see how all other dispensations are harmonised and unified in this, a whole host of churches resolved into a scientific unity. In the midst of the multiplicity of dispensations in the world, there is a concealed unity, and it is of the highest importance to us all that we should discover it with the light of logic and science.....Sure am I that amid their apparent anomalies and contradictions there

is a logical unity of idea and method, and an unbroken continuity of sequence. All these dispensations are connected with each other in the economy of Providence. They are linked together in one continuous chain, which may be traced to the earliest age. They are a concatenated series of ideas, which show a systematic evolution of thought and development of religious life.—*We Apostles of the N. D.*

There is no denying the fact that the “*Dispensation*” mentioned above is only an expression of Divine Revelation which is eternally progressive from the view-point of the gradual evolution of Human life. It is ceaselessly descending unto *Man* from the very time of his creation, and growing within him, from age to age, in volume, velocity and strength. It constantly changes for the better and brighter, and so is *ever new*. This eternal flow of Divine Dispensation through the inter-linked lives of all the prophets, saints, seers and sages of the world, is the “New Dispensation” (Navavidhan) as proclaimed by Brahmananda Keshub Chandra, all the different dispensations referred to being only its local waves. Hear again what Sri Keshub says,—

“I do not believe, Lord, that the book of Revelation has been closed, and that its last chapter has been given to the world. No, my God, I believe in Thy continued speaking in the ceaseless unfolding of Thy Gospel through endless ages. Day after day, Thou art revealing new light, and dispensing new gifts unto us. Who will deny this? O Father, thou art ever new, and Thy light is ever fresh. Many a chapter of Thy saving Gospel has yet to be written, and more deeply shall we hereafter enter into Thy Counsels, becoming wiser and purer in the light of new dispensations now veiled from us”—*Prayers*.

It is evident from what has been stated above that what is called *religion* is only an expression of Divine Revelation which is ever illuminating, and that its object is gradual salvation of Humanity. Religion being *one* and all-inclusive the Path of Human Salvation cannot but be *one*. *Practically*, religion itself is path of salvation. The glorious Vision of *One* alone! *One God!* *One Man!* *One Religion!* *One Path of Salvation!*

We have seen what One God and One Religion mean. Let us now come to Sri Keshub's "*One Man*" :

### III. The One Universal Man.

According to Sri Keshub's faith there dwells within every man an Invisible Being who is the *real man*. This *inner person* was conceived in Heaven and made of Divine Essence. He is, in a special sense eternal, because he was not only born *immortal*, but even before his birth he existed as an *idea* in the Bosom of God. Verily, he is the God-man, and his only food is Truth, Love and Holiness. He is essentially the same everywhere under every garb, whether it be the filthy rag of a beggar, or the jewelled robe of a king. He is above race, denomination, creed or colour. Sri Keshub speaks of this God-man,—the indestructible and immutable “I”—living within him, in a prayer, —

“চিন্ময় বস্তু আমি। আমি আকাশ, আমি শূন্য। আমি পঞ্চভূতের অতীত। আমি অদ্বিত, আমি ভূত নই, ভৌতিকের অতীত। ...এ আমি ঘনীভূত শক্তিসামর্থ্যের অপ্রকাশিত প্রকাশক। প্রচ্ছন্ন পদার্থ”—(১২।১৮৩)

This mysterious “I” is styled as “ছোট সচ্চিদানন্দ” in the same prayer. The American Mystic Emerson calls him the “Soul of the whole”, and the name given him by the German Seer



Humboldt is "the Interior and Immutable Higher Man."

It is impossible that in the Divine Economy the God-man should remain in the dark for ever. It is the will of God that he shall come out. And when he does come out and unite with the One-in-All and All-in-One, as has actually been the case in Keshub's life, he is transfigured into the One Universal Man of Navavidhan.

But inscrutable are the ways of God ! It is He, the Compassionate One, who has decreed that there should stand a great barrier in the way of the *ascent* alluded to above. This obstacle is the *Carnal Man*.

The Carnal man is the formidable enemy of the God-man. He is no other than the changeable everyday-man of the world, who is constantly controlled by what are called the laws of Association and Variation. He is a creature of circumstances, with whom time sports and space frolics. He is *lower self* personified and lives on animal pleasures.

Such a chimerical being is destined, under Divine influence, to melt and vanish for ever before the glow of the Ascending Child of God.

But how is this actually to take place? We are only to look into the inner Nature of Keshub for an answer to this question. His very life and character most unmistakably establish the truth that unless a man be regenerated through Divine Love, he can never attain *Mukti*, and be one with God or Humanity. The strong barrier, call it lower self or carnality—must be thoroughly destroyed in order to clear the way of the in-dwelling God-man. The sectional man of the world must *die* to make the advent of the One Universal Man possible and natural. And this miracle can only be performed by Regenerating Faith which sacrifices self and the world on the altar of God, so that it may say with wholeness of heart—*I am Thine*. Sri Keshub says,—

“Man, you know, is a composite being ; he is possessed of a bodily and a spiritual nature. This bodily nature he has in common with the lower animals : like them, he instinctively seeks the preservation and happiness of the body ; like them he is swayed by carnal appetites and passions, and the lusts of the flesh...This low life of animals, which man leads in his natural condition, does not and cannot satisfy him as he grows up to manhood : he must minister to

the wants of his soul and seek the safety and welfare of his higher nature. But what means does he usually employ to accomplish this object ? He simply strives to impose some kind of restraint on his carnal passions, and to curb them as often as they prove refractory, always holding the reins in his own hands. Such half measures seldom prove effectual...The fact is, man retains within him the perversity of his evil nature, his lusts and love of the world, and only seeks, by restraining them a little, to effect a compromise between religion and the world, his secret object being no other than to realise a life of convenient virtue. But this is not the new life man is destined to attain. To have that, one must be altogether above the old animal life, and enter upon a new and higher sphere of existence. There must be a clear turning-point in our career. This turning-point is *Faith*. Once brought to this point the heart of man undergoes a marvellous change,—not superficial change in his outward pursuits or habits of thought and feeling, but a constitutional and organic change in the root of his being...In the natural course of man's progress it is invariably the case, that as soon as the body dies the spirit rises regenerated, and

that the further the soul is from the world, the nearer it is to the Kingdom of God."

—*Regenerating Faith.*

Yes! As soon as the *Carnal Man* is totally annihilated in the manner described above, the unmanifested God-man comes out free and emancipated, and mingles with Humanity through God. The *like* to the *like*. The heart in him being the heart of all, and as every particle of the divine side of his character as good belongs to all, he recognises kindred spirits everywhere, and embraces all as his own. By Divine Love he is incorporated with Humanity, and Humanity is incorporated with him. He actually becomes One Man in the universe, with one heart beating in unison with Divine Harmony. Then he would say with Sri Brahmananda Keshub Chandra,—

"Where is my God? In me.

Where am I? In my God,"

"Where is Humanity? In me.

Where am I? In Humanity."—

*Behold The Light of Heaven In India.*

Homage to the One Universal Man of Navavidhan, who being one with God in Humanity, is one with Humanity in God.

#### IV. Sri Keshub's Synthetic Conception of Education.

According to Sri Keshub True Education is *unfolding of the whole man*, or in other words, *harmonious development of all faculties of man*. It is natural and spontaneous. Says he,—

“The natural growth of the body means the healthy and harmonious development of all its component parts. The same remark applies to the soul...There seems to be a principle of unity in the root of our life, both physical and spiritual, which gives vitality, strength, consistency and beauty to all the elements of our being simultaneously, so that when they grow, they grow together.....We are so constituted that no part of our spiritual nature can, in a normal condition, grow without effecting a corresponding improvement in all other parts of the system. The leaven of Truth leaveneth the whole man.”

*True Education* is therefore absolutely synthetic, its progress being always towards the Perfect One, through the unity of all truth, all goodness and all beauty.

“Be ye perfect even as thy Father in Heaven is perfect,”—Says Jesus Christ. Brahmananda Keshub Chandra says the same thing more explicitly. He asserts that “Man’s destiny is to attain God, or to make progress unto Him,” So, Man is *ordained* to attain God ! And to attain God is to be perfect even as God is perfect. But how is this possible ? Nothing is impossible with a man who has faith in the Living God of Navavidhan ! Hear what Sri Keshub says in a prayer,—

“It is Thy wish, O Thou Perfect One, to draw us always near and nearer unto perfection. Why then should we stop on the way ? Take us without ceasing from one stage to a higher stage of spiritual blessedness.”

How encouraging and hopeful are these inspired words ! God is indeed merciful, and He is the Pole-star of our life !

So, it is evident that *Divine Perfection* is the goal of *Education*, and the goal of *Education* is the end of our being.

“Perfection !” What does this word literally mean ? *Per* means, thoroughly, and *facio*, to do ; doing thoroughly. So, a thing becomes *perfect* when it has *thoroughly done* its life-work.

I do devoutly believe that every man is sent here to do a certain work which is his life-work—his mission. He can only become *perfect* by thoroughly doing this life-work in all its parts with the synthetic co-operation of all his fully-developed faculties. This means his education—his growth—his life.

Can Man “spring at one bound” to this *perfection* from the starting-point? No. Truly does Rousseau observe,—

“The greatest, the most important, the most useful rule of *education* is : do not save time but lose it. If the infant sprang at one bound from its mother’s breast to the age of reason, the present education would be quite suitable, but its natural growth calls for a different training.”

Man must pass through a fixed course of training from the very dawn of his intelligence, and advance gradually. He has to ascend the ladder of Human Progress step by step. He will move on and on in such a manner that when he arrives at maturity and looks backwards he will find that his whole progress from childhood to manhood has been *one continuous flow* without any break.—*This is education.*

*Education* is, therefore, not an abstract principle, or a mere theory, but a condition which has to be arrived at through a process of natural development, and which constantly changes for the better—the higher—the sublimer, with very forward step. This progress of the soul is not confined to one life or one age, but must go on steadily for ever. The conclusion is, therefore, inevitable that *Education* like Divine Perfection which is its *finite*, is eternally progressive.—“Eternal Progress of the soul !” Does this not mean eternal evolution of Divinity in Humanity ?

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The *ideal* of Sri Keshub's *New Sadhana* which connotes natural growth of the whole man, is *Synthetic Perfection*, and it relates to every phase of Human Progress. He has nothing to do with whatever smells of exclusivism. “Be perfect as God,”—is the precept he has inscribed in letters of gold, and has, as a matter of course, followed most faithfully. Says he,—

“The New Dispensation can not foster exclusiveness ; I have left it for the ideal of



synthetic perfection. If I love one devotee, all devotees come in ; if I see one part of God, all parts fill in. I have found all things now in a great nosegay, which I call New Dispensation," —  
*Jivan Veda.*

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# The Beautiful Man of Navavidhan.

“My flowers have bloomed, and so I shout with joy like a mad man. I take my stand on the Himalayas and say unto the world,—behold the sweet and sublime beauties of my flowers.”—

*Prayers.*

Can you tell me, oh my brothers, who sings this weird *song of flowers* ?

He is Brahmananda Keshub Chandra—the *Beautiful Man of Navavidhan*.

Behold him ! Is he not beautiful ?

“A commanding figure, well-proportioned, in his Eastern garb so becoming to him [Sri Keshub], with a face beautifully moulded into classic expression placid and serene with that true humility which bespeaks intellectual greatness ; you felt, as his presence grew upon you, that you might have only ‘to touch the hem of his garment’ to catch something of the apparently Divine Sanctity of his life.

“Everything about him lent itself to this feeling, and his pensive thought brought an expression to his features that spoke more

eloquently than words that he was full of tenderness and compassion for all men, and that his real life was inward and not outward.”—*T. E. Stephens, J. P.* \*

“A fine countenance, a majestic presence, and that rapt look which of itself exerts an almost irresistible fascination over impressive minds, lent wonderful force to a swift, kindling, and poetical oratory which married itself to his highly spiritual teaching as perfect music unto noble words.”—*London Daily News* (on Sri Keshub)\*

“I saw him [ Keshub Chandra Sen ] speak in the Town Hall—a true king of men. Ram Mohan was, as Max Muller called him, Rex. king ; but he was the intellectual king only. Keshub alone was king of the heart of New India.”—The Hon’ble Jogendra Chandra Ghose.\*

“Keshub had a strange light in his look. Few could stand the glare of his ardent gaze, when he chose to look any one fully in the face. But this he seldom did. He habitually restricted himself within the innate composure of his gracious presence. Only when delivering his rare utterances before vast assemblies, he turned upon them the full lightning of his kindled eyes. And then, as Emerson would say, ‘the

spirit orbed itself' in his face, and his face was as eloquent as his words...Who shall forget the pure sweet dignity of his presence as he sat on the pulpit of the *Brahma Mandir* in his simple costume, the numerous congregation above and around still like a midnight forest. To look at him was a blessing, to hear his voice a comfort and an exaltation. His presence called to mind everything that was true, good or great."—Rev. P. C. Mazumdar. \*

This sublime beauty, whether outward or inward, is only an expression of the harmony of Truth, Love and Holiness underlying his spiritual life.

His whole being is, indeed, one bright ray of Divine Harmony, which kisses every moment of existence and turns it to gold. So joyful is his face that smiles and sun-shine seem to be always playing around him. And to approach him is to be spontaneously cheered and refreshed by Heavenly Light, and to enjoy perpetual bliss and felicity. He is "*Brahmananda*," and the burden of his life-song is,—

\* They are all eye-witnesses who directly caught from Sri Keshub the "hallowed flame."

"Beautiful beautiful beautiful art Thou, oh God ! Shower the nectar of *Bhakti* on my thirsty heart and make it an abode of Joy and serene Peace...Whenever I look at Thy sweet smiling face, I can not help shedding tears of love, and lo ! all my sorrows and afflictions vanish in a moment."— *Prayers*.

"God of eternal Joy, Thou art our supreme bliss and ever-lasting felicity.....Keep us constantly inebriated with Thy love, and reveal to us the secret of daily increasing our spiritual inebriation.—*Prayers*.

Sri Keshub is in continual touch with The True, The Good, The Beautiful, and no wonder that his whole existence should be all aglow with the flame of Divine Beauty, and that his heart should constantly remain inebriated with Divine Love.

Is there any sign of Sri Keshub's thirst for the nectar of Divine Beauty being appeased ? No ; it is ever on the increase, and his night-and-day prayer is,—

"Renew the colour of Thy beauty always before my eyes, Oh my Father, and let it never

fade in my heart. Unfold Thy beauty before me petal after petal like a glorious flower."

—*Prayers.*

Sri Keshub is a Singular Man of Faith, and his faith in God connotes Truth, Goodness and Beauty. The Deity he adores is সত্যম্! শিবম্! সুন্দরম্!—The True! The Good! The Beautiful! So, to have faith in that Deity is to be *true, good and beautiful*. Is it not a fact that The True is always good, and The Good always beautiful? One in three and three in One!

Being a man of Faith, Sri Keshub surrenders his all to the Holy Spirit, and becomes one with Him in Love and Righteousness. The God of Harmony comes in when *self*—the breeder of discord and depravity—has gone out. Where is Sri Keshub's *self*? He himself gives the answer,—

"Where is *my*, where is this *self*? It does not exist. Long since has the little bird 'I' soared away from this sanctuary I know not where, never to return again. My *self* has long since been annihilated by my God,"—*Am I An Inspired Prophet?*

The man of the world is dead! Long live

the *Regenerated Man* ! Listen to the "*Psalms*" of salvation,—

"My God is my all ; there is no salvation but in Him. He is the God of my salvation"

"I was blind, He gave me eyes ; I was dead, he gave me life."

"He has performed miracles of grace in my life ; the wonders of His redeeming Love have I seen with my own eyes."

"I chose to be a ragged beggar in the streets, but he said, No, that can not be ; I will make thee a bright city on the hills. So, He adorned me and decorated me with faith and devotion, and made me both rich and *beautiful*. I am now a joy unto myself."—*Sri Keshub*.

There is no denying the fact that Sri Keshub's inner and outer splendour is only a reflex of the Shining Presence of the Indwelling Holy Spirit, the *reflector* being his *Regenerating Faith*.

Brahmananda Keshub Chandra has found the Rock of Truth, and his heart rejoices in having seen the Eternal Fountain of Goodness and Beauty. His intoxicated soul gratefully exclaims,—

"Father, I am full of Thee. Thy holiness

has made me clean. Thy joy has gladdened me."

"Eternal Joy, at Thy advent there is jubilee in my heart, There is music and dancing, and unceasing festivity. I know not why or how it is, but I feel an exquisitely pleasant, a rapturous sensation within me. How Thy Presence makes me smile ! *I bless Thee, my God.*"—*Prayers.*

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### The Pilgrim's Evening Prayer.

The sun is down, and my sojourn *here* is almost over. Strengthen my faith, and prepare my heart, Oh God, for the great mysterious Journey that awaits me *hereafter* also.

Everything that I called my own in this world, is left far behind ; and I am now quite alone. Whom have I but Thee, Oh Merciful Mother, to befriend me ?

Descend unto me, Oh Heavenly Guide, and lead me on. Before me rolls a weird unknown sea which it is beyond my power to tide over. My heart trembles with fear, and I fervently



appeal to Thy sympathy, Oh Compassionate One !

Abide with me, my Eternal Companion. The evening twilight fades, and darkness gathers around me. The stillness of solitude grows in depth and intensity, and my soul pants after Thee and *Thine Own*.

Thou art my only refuge and ever-lasting stay, Oh Eternal Spirit ! Stretch forth Thy helping hands and conduct me to Thy Celestial Mansion that shines so invitingly on the other side of the Boundless Sea, and where Thy beloved Bhakta Brahamananda Keshub Chandra rapturously sings Thy glory in company with all saints, seers and prophets of all ages, and passes his days most happily in Holy Communion. Oh ! How my heart yearns to be there and sing Hallelujah unto Thee in the company of Thine Angelic Choir !

Glory, glory, glory to Thee, Oh All-blissful Mother, now and for ever !

Shanti ! Shanti ! Shanti !

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# “SRI KESHUB-SAMAGAM”

AND

# “SRI KESHUB-KAHINI”

BY

MATI LAL DAS

**Review and Criticisms :**

(Extracts)

## *Sri Keshub-Kahini —*

“The book under review is a chronicle of events framing the Brahmananda’s career which is one of the mightiest hidden resources of the country...The present volume is congested with facts, and will no doubt provide the public with one of the best opportunities to get acquainted with the life and teachings of Sri Keshub.”—Amrita Bazar Patrika (27-6-37)

## *Sri Keshub-Samagam—*

“It is also full of prayers and words of wisdom. The book will please a thirsty soul.”—Amrita Bazar Patrika (25-7-37)

## *Sri Keshub-Kahini—*

“The book deals with the life and activities of The New Man of The New Dispensation in a unique and

fascinating manner, and it can be properly described as a very successful and helpful chart giving at a glance a proper perspective of the head and heart of the mighty figure of the twentieth century. The style and treatment of the subject is such as will profit both young and old.”—Navavidhan (10-7-33)

Mr. N. C. Sen, 2nd son of Sri Keshub Chandra, writes to the author about Sri Keshub Kahini,—

“I had seen your recent publication when my sister Maharani Sucharu Devi shewed it to me before my departure from Calcutta, and I need hardly say how greatly I was impressed by reading it. Pray accept our warmest gratitude for the signal service you have rendered, not only to our Church and Community, but to the world. I trust that in time this book will be translated into English.”—31-15-33

That venerable “grand old man” of Patna, Rev. Gouri Prasad Mazumdar speaks of *Keshub Kahini* in a long letter to the author,—

“It is a thing of a mighty inspiration that has worked in your life. Your age and your gray hairs are still so busy to give us fuller crops of that great life. Your elaborate collections of the interesting anecdotes of that Kaleidoscopic life and your symmetrical arrangements of the things unfold a fuller dictionary of the life of him whom so many have misunderstood.”

“কেশব-কাহিনী ধারাবাহিক জীবন-চরিত নয়। বহু আয়াস ও অশেষণে লব্ধ ব্রহ্মানন্দ কেশবচন্দ্রের জীবনের অসংখ্য ও বিচিত্র কাহিনীতে পুস্তকখানি পূর্ণ। পড়িতে পড়িতে পাঠকের কৌতুহল উদ্দীপ্ত হইয়া উঠে এবং ব্রাহ্মসমাজের ইতিহাসেও জ্ঞান লাভ হয়।”—

ব্রহ্মবাদী (বরিশাল), পৌষ ও মাঘ, ১৩৪০

### শ্রীকেশব-সমাগম ও শ্রীকেশব-কাহিনী—

“সমালোচ্য গ্রন্থ দুই খানিকে একই গ্রন্থের দুইটি ভাগ বলা যাইতে পারে। প্রথম ভাগে কেশবজীবনের নিগূঢ় তত্ত্ব, এবং দ্বিতীয় ভাগে দৃষ্টান্ত স্বরূপ উক্ত জীবনের ক্ষুদ্র ক্ষুদ্র কাহিনী বিবৃত হইয়াছে। কেশব-চন্দ্র ভারতবর্ষের একজন ক্ষণজন্মা সুসন্তান ছিলেন তাহাতে সন্দেহ নাই। তাঁহার শতবার্ষিক জন্মোৎসব শীঘ্রই অনুষ্ঠিত হইবে। এই সময় তাঁহার প্রতি মুগ্ধ একজন ভক্ত এই গ্রন্থখানি প্রকাশিত করিয়া বিস্মৃতি-প্রবণ বাঙ্গালীকে তাঁহার বাণীগুলি স্বরণ করাইয়া দিয়া এবং তাঁহার আত্মিক জীবনের পরিচয় দিতে অগ্রসর হইয়া আমাদের ধন্যবাদভাজন হইয়াছেন।...আলোচ্য গ্রন্থদ্বয়ে লেখক ব্রহ্মানন্দের জীবন-কাহিনী ধারাবাহিক ভাবে লিপিবদ্ধ না করিয়া প্রশংসনীয় নিষ্ঠা সহকারে তৎসম্বন্ধীয় নানা তথ্য ও বাণী সম্বলিত করিয়াছেন।”

বিচিত্রা (জ্যৈষ্ঠ, ১৩৪৪)

কেশব-কাহিনী—“ঢাকা বিধানপল্লীস্থ মঙ্গলকুটীরবাসী, নববিধান-বিশ্বাসী, শ্রীকেশবানুরাগী, শ্রদ্ধা ও প্রীতিভাজন ভ্রাতা শ্রীযুক্ত মতিলাল দাশ বি, এ মহাশয়কে অন্তরের গভীরতম কৃতজ্ঞতাপূর্ণ আলিঙ্গন ও অভিবাদন জানাইতেছি। তাঁহার রচিত শ্রীকেশব-কাহিনী পাঠ করিয়া আমরা যে কি প্রীতি ও আনন্দিত হইয়াছি, তাহা কথায় জানাইতে পারি না।...পঞ্চবিংশতি অধ্যায়ে পুস্তকখানি রচিত।

বিশ্বাসী সাধক গ্রন্থকার ‘উপক্রম’ হইতে ‘মহাপ্রস্থান’ পর্য্যন্ত প্রকৃত-বিশ্বাসাত্মা মহাপুরুষের জীবনকাহিনী অধ্যাত্ম সাধন ও গভীর গবেষণা সহকারে বিবৃত করিয়াছেন। পুস্তকখানি বাস্তবিকই শ্রীকেশবজীবনানুসরণের অতি উপাদেয় সহায় হইয়াছে। নববিধানাচার্য্যের এই জীবনকাহিনী অধ্যয়ন করিলে সাধকসাধিকাগণ বিশেষ উপকৃত হইবেন”—ধর্ম্মতত্ত্ব (শ্রদ্ধেয় ভাই প্রিয়নাথ মল্লিক)—১৩ই পৌষ, ১৩৪০

“শ্রীযুক্ত মতিলাল দাস মহাশয়ের রচিত “শ্রীকেশব-সমাগম” পুস্তকখানি আমি বহুবার পাঠ করিয়া আনন্দিত ও উপকৃত হইয়াছি। ব্রহ্মানন্দ কেশবচন্দ্র সেন মহাশয়ের ধর্ম্মজীবনের বিশেষত্ব ইহাতে অতি সুন্দর ও বিশদভাবে প্রদর্শিত হইয়াছে। পরম শ্রদ্ধার সহিত সেই মহাজনের চরিত্রের নানা লোকোত্তর বিবরণ ইহার মধ্যে লেখক সংগ্রহ করিয়াছেন।...যিনি এই পুস্তক পাঠ করিবেন তিনি নিঃসংশয়ে আমার ছায় আনন্দিত ও উপকৃত হইবেন।”—অধ্যাপক চারু বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়, এম, এ (ওপণ্ডাসিক)—১৮-৭-৩১

“শ্রীযুক্ত মতিলাল দাস মহাশয় “শ্রীকেশব-সমাগম” নামক এক-খানা পুস্তিকায় মহাপুরুষ কেশবচন্দ্রের আধ্যাত্মিক পরিচয় দিয়া বাঙ্গালী পাঠকবর্গের ধন্যবাদভাজন হইয়াছেন। আত্মিক জীবনের আলোচনায়ই মানুষের কৰ্ম্ম-জীবনের মূলমন্ত্রগুলি খুঁজিয়া পাওয়া যায়। মতিলাল বাবু ভক্তের চক্ষে শ্রীকেশবকে দর্শন করিয়া উক্ত মহাপুরুষের চরিত্র ও সাধনার বিকাশ কিরূপে হইল তাহা নির্দেশ করিয়াছেন। যুক্তি তর্কের চেয়ে ভক্তিই সহজভাবে প্রাণ স্পর্শ করে, তাই পুস্তকখানি বেশ হৃদয়গ্রাহী হইয়াছে।...সর্ব্বত্রই কেশবচন্দ্রের লেখা হইতে অসংখ্য

উৎকৃষ্ট বাণী উদ্ভূত করিয়া প্রতিপাত্ত বিষয়ের প্রাঞ্জলতা বৃদ্ধি করিয়াছেন ; ইহাতে পুস্তকখানা অধিকতর সরস ও মূল্যবান হইয়াছে । কেশবচন্দ্রের অদ্ভুত পাপবোধ, উদার সম্বয়বাদ, সরল প্রেম, নিরহঙ্কার সেবাবৃত্তি, মুক্তি বিষয়ে আশাবাদ, সহজ স্বাভাবিক যোগতত্ত্ব এবং ভগবানে নির্ভরশীলতার কথা চমৎকার ভাবে ফুটাইয়া তোলা হইয়াছে ।”—  
অধ্যাপক কাজী মোতাহার হোসেন, এম-এস-সি (সাহিত্যিক) ২৪-৭-৩৩

‘গ্রন্থখানির নাম “শ্রীকেশব-সমাগম” দেওয়া হইয়াছে। গ্রন্থকার ক্রমে নবধর্মের বিশ্বাস লাভ করিয়া, ক্রমে উপাসনা, পাঠ ও প্রসঙ্গের ভিতর দিয়া শ্রীকেশব-জীবনে প্রবেশ করিয়াছেন তাহা এই গ্রন্থের প্রথম ভাগে প্রকাশ করিয়াছেন। তৎপর তিনি সরল সুন্দর ভাষায় দিব্য তুলিকায় প্রাণের বিশ্বাস, ভক্তি ও অনুরাগের স্বর্গীয় বর্ণে শ্রীকেশবচন্দ্রের জীবন যেরূপ সুন্দর ও মনোহর ভাবে চিত্রিত করিয়াছেন, তাহাতে তাঁহার লেখা পড়িয়া কেশবচন্দ্রের ধর্মজীবনতীর্থে প্রবেশ, কেশবজীবন সম্ভোগ, নববিধান সম্ভোগ সর্বসাধারণ পাঠক পাঠিকার পক্ষে সহজ হইবে।...ধর্মশিক্ষার্থী শিক্ষার্থীদের পক্ষেও এ গ্রন্থ বিশেষ পথপ্রদর্শক হইবে। ...এ গ্রন্থ বঙ্গের ঘরে ঘরে, বিশেষভাবে নববিধানক্ষেত্রে প্রত্যেক পরিবারে গৃহীত হয়, আদৃত হয়, পঠিত হয় ইহা আমরা আকাঙ্ক্ষা করি।’—  
ধর্মতত্ত্ব ( :লা ফাল্গুন, ১৩৩৬ )

“আপনার প্রেরিত শ্রীকেশব-সমাগম পাইয়া আপনাকে কৃতজ্ঞতা জানাইতেছি। বড় মহৎ কার্য্য করিয়াছেন। আপনার সাক্ষ্য অতি জীবন্ত এবং খাঁটি। উপাধ্যায় মহাশয় [ ঋষি গৌরগোবিন্দ ] আচার্য্যদেবের অধ্যাত্ম বিষয়ে লিখিতে ইচ্ছুক ছিলেন, কিন্তু সময়

কুলায় নাই। আপনি সেই অভাব যথাবিহিত পূরণ করিয়া ধত্ত  
হইলেন।”—শ্রদ্ধেয় ভাই বিহারীলাল সেন (১৪।৭।৪১)—শিলচর—

“শ্রদ্ধেয় শ্রীমতিলাল দাশ মহাশয়েব লেখা ‘শ্রীকেশব-সমাগম’ পরম  
আগ্রহের সহিত পড়লুম। তিনি ভক্ত ও জিজ্ঞাসু মন নিয়ে স্বর্গীয়  
কেশবচন্দ্র সেনের যে জীবনালোচনা করেছেন তা ভাবে, ভাষায়,  
চরিত্রস্বষ্টিতে সার্থক হয়েছে। কেশবচন্দ্র বহু গুণের অধিকারী ও  
বিরাট্ মণীষাসম্পন্ন ব্যক্তি ছিলেন। তাঁর সে ব্যক্তিত্ব ও মণীষা সরল,  
হৃদয়গ্রাহী এবং শিক্ষাপ্রদভাবে আর কারো লেখায় এমন ভাবে ফুটে  
উঠেছে বলে আমার মনে পড়ে না।”—মৌলভী হুস্র আহাম্মদ  
সাহিত্যিক (ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়)।

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শ্রীকেশব-সমাগম—মূল্য বার আনা।

শ্রীকেশব-কাহিনী—মূল্য এক টাকা চারি আনা।

সাধন-গীতিকা—( বদ্ধস্থ )

প্রাপ্তিস্থান—মঙ্গল কুটীর, বিধানপল্লী, রমনা, ঢাকা।







